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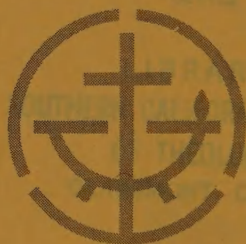
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# THE BIBLE FOR HOME & SCHOOL

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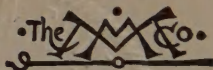
*THE BIBLE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL*

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THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE  
ROMANS

EDWARD INCREASE BOSWORTH



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THE BIBLE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL

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COMMENTARY

— ON —

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL  
TO THE ROMANS

BY

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TO THE ROMANS

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

THE BIBLE FOR HOME AND SCHOOL is intended to place the results of the best modern biblical scholarship at the disposal of the general reader. It does not seek to duplicate other commentaries to which the student must turn. Its chief characteristics are (*a*) its rigid exclusion of all *processes*, both critical and exegetical, from its notes; (*b*) its presupposition and its use of the assured results of historical investigation and criticism wherever such results throw light on the biblical text; (*c*) its running analysis both in text and comment; (*d*) its brief explanatory notes adapted to the rapid reader; (*e*) its thorough but brief Introductions; (*f*) its use of the Revised Version of 1881, supplemented with all important renderings in other versions.

Biblical science has progressed rapidly during the past few years, but the reader still lacks a brief, comprehensive commentary that shall extend to him in usable form material now at the disposition of the student. It is hoped that in this series the needs of intelligent Sunday School teachers have been met, as well as those of clergymen and lay readers, and that in scope, purpose, and loyalty to the Scriptures as a foundation of Christian thought and life, its volumes will stimulate the intelligent use of the Bible in the home and the school.





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# THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS

## I. PAUL

### I. HIS RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

The intense fervor of Paul's writings shows that they were in large measure the product of a profound religious experience. In order to understand them it is therefore necessary to discuss briefly the outstanding features of his religious experience. It is perhaps better to say that what appears in Paul's writings is his own interpretation of his experience made with reference to reproducing it in the lives of other men. A man's interpretation of his own experience is necessarily determined by, and expressed in the terms of, the pre-suppositions of his thought, the things he assumes without question.

#### (I) *The main pre-suppositions of Paul's thought.*

The pre-suppositions of a man's thought usually cannot be stated with precision because they are seldom explicitly reported and not always even consciously recognized by the man himself. In the case of Paul, moreover, the revolutionary experience at the beginning of his Christian life was a disturbing element the exact effect of which on his pre-suppositions is not

entirely clear. The following appear with reasonable distinctness. They may be traced in his letters and in non-Christian Jewish literature of the period 200 B. C. to 100 A. D.\*

(a) Paul always assumed, both before and after he became a Christian, the existence of God, a supreme, all powerful (I Cor. 8:6), all-wise and merciful (Rom. 11:32-36) personal being whose domain centered in the heavens but included the earth and "all things."

(b) There were at least three heavens (II Cor. 12:2, 4) and probably seven, as in the *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs* (e.g., Levi. 3:1), a book with which Paul must have been familiar, and in the *Secrets of Enoch* where the third heaven is Paradise (cf. II Cor. 12:2, 4) with its "blessed singing" of the 300 angels (8:1, 8) whose unspeakable words man might not utter (II Cor. 12:4). There were also regions below the earth (Phil. 2:10).

(c) In the higher heavens was the "glory" of God which men had come short of (Rom. 3:23), a kind of existence enjoyed by God and other heavenly beings, involving moral excellence and also a kind of semi-physical radiant light (II Cor. 11:14) that could shine in the face of the glorified Jesus (II Cor. 4:4-6) and that could be shared by the world of nature (Rom. 8:21).

(d) This morally blessed radiant existence is characteristic of good "spirit" as contrasted with "flesh"

\* Almost all of the non-Christian writings cited may be found in "The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament" edited by R. H. Charles, published in 1913.

(not of evil spirit, cf. Eph. 6:12). In the heavens there are lordly angels, "thrones," "dominions," "principalities," "powers" (Col. 1:16, *Testaments*, etc., Levi 3:8; *Secrets of Enoch* 20:1), "the archangel" (I Thess. 4:16). Only spirit bodies (I Cor. 15:44), not flesh bodies, can enter the glorious heavens (I Cor. 15:50; Rom. 8:23; Phil. 3:21).

(e) Through the earth, dark (Eph. 6:12) as contrasted with the radiant upper heavens, the evil prince of the power of the air ranges (Eph. 2:2; 6:12; the second heaven, *Secrets of Enoch*, ch. 7), or in the firmament below the first heaven and the air just above the earth where they are "envying," "fighting," "plundering," "doing violence" to one another (*Ascension of Isaiah* 10:29-30). The evil prince blinds men's spiritual vision (II Cor. 4:4), hinders the messengers of God in their travels (I Thess. 2:18) and inflicts disease upon the human body (II Cor. 12:7; I Cor. 5:5). "Sin," and perhaps "Death," sometimes seem to be personal agents of the evil prince, producing the common phenomena sin and death that give them their names (Rom. 6-7). The "elements," or "rudiments," seem also to be personal lords of the flesh age, agents of the evil prince (Gal. 4:3, 9; Col. 2:8, 20). At least they become sources of evil when they are deified.

(f) On the other hand the good powers of the spiritual world may operate directly upon life in such a way as to result in the occurrence of "signs, wonders and mighty works," that is, miracles (II Cor. 12:12-13; I Cor. 12:4-11).

(g) The history of man on the earth is divided into two ages; this present evil age of flesh (Gal. 1:4; II Cor. 4:4) and the Coming Age of spirit which will be introduced by the advent of the Messiah from heaven (I Thess. 4:16-17). Adam, the founder of the human race, had introduced sin and death into all subsequent generations of the present age according to the account in Genesis (*Apocalypse of Baruch* 54:15, 19; 4 Esdras 7:118-119; Rom. 5:12). Back of Adam, however, were the great cosmic evil beings, already mentioned, who appear also in Genesis in the serpent form. In their vast domain of darkness Adam and his race were items. At the end of the age they and all theirs would be overthrown in the terrible "wrath of God" to be experienced at the Messiah's judgment day.

(h) Before Paul became a Christian he had a conception of this Messiah. It is impossible to tell exactly what it was, for the literature of the period shows that there were various messianic conceptions current among the Jews. Our clue is found in the ideas that appear in Paul's letters. The messianic conception that appears in them would be one that he had always held, modified by two possible influences: first, the character and teaching of Jesus and, second, Paul's tendency to make some speculative additions of his own in the process of working out a Christian apologetic for use in missionary preaching. To make such speculative additions would have been thoroughly in accord with his confidence in the "word of wisdom" and the "word of knowledge" that came as "gifts"



from the Spirit (I Cor. 12:8; cf. 2:8-13). Reading Paul's letters in the light of current Jewish literature of the period, it appears that he began the Christian life with the pre-supposition that the Messiah was a sinless being (II Cor. 5:21; *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs*, Judah 24:1; *Psalms of Solomon* 17:41) who lived in heaven with God in glory (Phil. 2:6; *Enoch* 48:2-3; 70:1-2; 4 Esdras 14:9). Later, in his Christian period, Paul conceived this heavenly Christ to have held a unique position as God's agent in the creation of all things even of the lordly archangels (Col. 1:15-17). In Jewish literature "Wisdom," "the Word" and "the Spirit," but not the Messiah, are connected with the creation of the world. Paul's ascription of the creative function to the Christ may therefore have been a product either of his own Christian thought or that of other early Christians. The chief function of the Christ was to come from heaven with a company of angels (I Thess. 3:13; cf. *Enoch* 1:9) to execute a judgment that would establish righteousness in the earth and make the purified Jewish nation supreme in the kingdom of God (*Ps. Solomon* 17:23-46). As has been said, Paul in his pre-Christian days already probably conceived of this judgment as one that would end the present age of flesh, provide the righteous, living and dead, with bodies of heavenly glory and introduce the New Age of spirit (Phil. 3:20-21; Rom. 8:23; I Thess. 4:16; I Cor. 15:50-53; *Apocalypse of Baruch* 30:1-3; 51:1-4; *Enoch* 45:4-5; 62:15-16; 108:11-12; *Secrets of Enoch* 66:7-8). The forces of evil in this judgment,

especially Satan and bad angels, would be overthrown (Rom. 16:20; I Cor. 6:3; *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs*, Levi 18:12); the decaying, death-smitten material creation would be transformed into something radiant and deathless (Rom. 8:19-22; *Enoch* 45:4-5; 91:16-17).

(i) It was a pre-supposition of Paul in his pre-Christian days that the righteousness to be made secure forevermore by the messianic judgment would consist in the punctillious fulfilment of the holy, eternal will of God, expressed in the unchangeable law of Moses as interpreted by many generations of devout learned rabbis (Gal. 1:14).

(j) God had seen to it that all of the Jewish scriptures should have reference to the needs of coming generations (Rom. 4:23-24; 15:4), sometimes with very little regard for what seemed to be their original and natural application (I Cor. 9:9-10). The real meaning of the scriptures must sometimes be ascertained through skilful use of the allegorical method of interpretation (Gal. 4:21-31). Their statements were absolutely authoritative no matter how contrary to reason they might seem to be (Rom. 9:14-21).

(k) The Jews, who were entrusted with the sacred oracles of this law (Rom. 2:20; 3:2), had been given by God a distinct primacy among the nations (Rom. 1:16; 3:1; 9:4-5; 11:1, 16-18; *Apocalypse of Baruch* 82:2-9). In Paul's Christian period he came to feel that the primacy would terminate with the end of the present age and disappear together with the distinction between male and female, bond-slave and master

(Col. 3:11; Gal. 3:28). In a sense therefore these distinctions could be ignored before the end of the age (Gal. 3:28; II Cor. 5:16-17), yet in another sense not (I Cor. 11:3; Col. 3:18, 22; Rom. 11:18).

(1) Paul's readiness later, as a Christian apostle, to go to the Gentiles gives rise to the surmise that in his pre-Christian days he, like the author of the *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs* (Levi. 4:4; 14:4; Benj. 10:5), thought of the messianic kingdom as destined by God to include many Gentiles, of course as proselytes keeping the law the light of which was "given to lighten every man" (*Testaments*, Levi 14:4). Did he think that they would be circumcised and keep all the details of the law, or simply worship Jehovah without circumcision, as King Izates was advised by his Jewish merchant friend, Ananias, to do (Josephus, *Ant.* 20:2:3-4)? In view of Gal. 1:14 it is probable that Paul, like Eleazar in the case of King Izates (Josephus, *Ant.* 20:2:4), would have insisted on circumcision.

These pre-suppositions came to Paul chiefly from an environment of Jewish life and literature, a Jewish environment that had, however, for several centuries been somewhat influenced by Greek, Persian and Babylonian thought. This combination of influences would have been felt in the Tarsus Ghetto, and there even in the case of a family with the strong Pharisaic traditions that prevailed in Paul's home (Phil. 3:5; cf. Acts 23:6). The fact that, although Pharisees, this family nevertheless possessed Roman citizenship

(Acts 22: 28) implies a degree of susceptibility on their part to foreign influence.

In Paul's Christian period the pre-suppositions of his thought would naturally have been affected by wide travel and intimate personal acquaintance with gentlemen of Greek culture, especially such very interesting converts to his preaching as had previously been adventurous seekers after moral betterment and eternal life in the mystery religions. There is less evidence of Greek influence in Romans than in some other letters. This may be due to the fact, to be noted later (p. 36), that in Romans Paul is trying to frame a platform that will draw to itself both Jews and Greeks in preparation for the end of the present age, and that, therefore, so far as possible eliminates all allusions which might be offensive to either party.

### (2) *Paul's personal religious experience.*

Paul was an intensely religious man before he became a Christian. The outstanding features in his religious outlook were two: the will of God as expressed in the eternal law of Moses (Gal. 1: 14; Phil. 3: 6) and the Messiah who would through his cosmic judgment secure universal obedience to this law in the New Age. He was an enthusiastic Pharisaic Messianist, but at the same time a loyal Roman citizen, not a revolutionary zealot. This was possible because, as has been said above, he had the optimistic hopeful view of the future of the Gentile world that is found in the Pharisaic *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs*. The Gentile world was desperately wicked (Rom. 1: 18-32),

but God meant the Jews to bring at least some portion of it into obedience to the law of Moses.

Paul very probably felt that a great revival of penitent obedience to the law on the part of God's people would bring the Messiah down from heaven. This idea appears in the Talmud (Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmud* p. 334; cf. *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs*, Dan 6:4) and the idea that repentance would produce this result is attributed by the author of Acts to the primitive Palestinian Christians (3:19-21). This explains Paul's passionate hatred of Jesus and the Nazarenes. Jesus was thought by him to have opposed the rabbis at certain vital points in their effort to secure from the people such obedience to the law as would bring the Messiah from heaven to inaugurate the New Age. There must always have been a large element among the people that was either openly against the rabbis or very sluggishly responsive to them. The special zeal for the law which characterized Paul (Gal. 1:14) implies the existence of such an element. In the Gospel pages this element appears as the "multitudes," many of them "publicans and sinners," who gathered about Jesus. With them Jesus had become immensely popular as a prophet. This had made him an exceedingly dangerous person. One circumstance seemed to the rabbis to give the clue to a proper understanding of his real character, namely, his authority over demons. This could have been possessed by such a person only because he stood high in the councils of Satan (cf. Mark 3:22). He was one whom Satan had set forth to seduce the people

from obedience to the law of God, to prevent the coming of the Messiah and the dawning of the New Age. Fortunately the Great Court had finally extorted from him a confession that he thought himself to be the Christ, and he therefore stood out clearly as an Anti-Christ. God's awful curse fell swiftly upon him and he hung in naked shame on the tree. The peril to true religion seemed to be safely past. But the Jesus movement was not dead. He who had been really a devilish Anti-Christ, cursed by God, was declared by his deluded followers, whose eyes Satan had blinded, to have been honored by God with a resurrection and to be the true Christ. The delusion seemed to be spreading rapidly through the nation. There was only one thing for earnest right-minded patriots to do under such circumstances and that was to kill the enemy. Paul sprang to the front with all the devotion of his deeply religious nature and became the leader in a campaign for the extermination of the Nazarenes (Gal. 1: 13, 23; I Cor. 15: 9; cf. Acts 22: 4; 26: 10). But now the movement began to show new and startling possibilities of peril to true religion. The fleeing Nazarenes went to the *Ghettos* of foreign cities, each individual there to become a fresh center of contagion. The Jews in these *Ghettos*, surrounded by pagan life and worship, competing for pagan trade in business, were always in special danger of losing something of their devotion to the holy law of Moses. If the Nazarene movement should strike its roots into this congenial soil, no one could calculate the harm that would be done! Unless the Nazarene movement was



exterminated the Christ would not soon come down from heaven and the holy ideal which the good men of Israel were cherishing would not soon be realized. Rabbi Saul set out, therefore, an apostle of God's holy law, a missionary of Pharisaic righteousness, to prepare his people in all lands for the coming of Christ by destroying the Satan-Jesus movement.

There are hints (Rom. 7:7-25; cf. Acts 26:14) that Paul's religious life during this period was restless and contrasted strangely with the radiant hope and deep peace of the Nazarenes (cf. Acts 6:15; 7:54-60) from whom he conscientiously strove to extort penitent denunciation of Jesus (Acts 26:10-11).

This career of persecution was suddenly stopped by an event of revolutionary importance. Paul later described it as a direct act of God, revealing "his Son" to him within his inmost being (Gal. 1:16) where contact with the spirit world would most naturally be experienced and where Paul's wonderful subsequent experience found its sphere. It seemed to him later such an appearance of Christ as the Nazarene leaders had witnessed (I Cor. 15:5-8). He seemed to himself to have been "laid hold on by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:12). The narratives in Acts (9:1-18; 22:3-21; 26:1-23) are in substantial accord with Paul's interpretation of the experience. Near Damascus (cf. Gal. 1:17) he suddenly found himself in the midst of an overpowering light. The heavenly "spiritual" world with its unspeakable "glory" had broken into this world of "flesh" as he had expected it to do whenever the Christ should be revealed from heaven.

Could it be that the judgment day was here and that the Christ had come without waiting for the great repentance, for a law-keeping Israel, without waiting for the blasphemous Jesus movement to be stamped out? Then from the midst of the heavenly glory he saw a face (II Cor. 4: 6) and heard a voice sounding down into the depths of his soul and saying in the language he had learned in the home of his infancy (Acts 26: 14): "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me?" "Who are you, Sir?" he said in terror. To his horror the voice replied, "I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting." Jesus, the Satanic blasphemer, who had been cursed on the cross by God, was in heavenly glory and possessed the Christ's own power to make heavenly glory break into the world of flesh! Saul was experiencing the Christ's judgment day. What would the Christ do to him? The voice told him to go on his way to his intended destination and find out there. He rose up a sinful man blinded by the glory of Christ's judgment day and yet not destroyed. He was still on earth among men whose hands of flesh he felt as in amazement they led him into the city.

For the purpose of understanding Romans it is necessary simply to recognize Paul's interpretation of this experience without discussing what actually happened. The present writer holds that the spirit of Jesus here actually met the spirit of Paul and made his presence felt in ways psychologically determined by Paul's temperament, previous history and present circumstances.

What was the effect of this tremendous spiritual shock upon Paul's religious outlook?

(a) First of all he learned to join the title "Christ," the title of holiness and glory, with the name "Jesus," the name of blasphemy and shame. He learned to say "Christ Jesus."

(b) He learned that Christ Jesus was kind, was full of "grace." One of the severest criticisms passed by the rabbis upon Jesus had been that he consorted in a friendly way with the most outrageous law-breakers, "publicans and sinners." Paul, overwhelmed with the sense of having fought against the Christ and killed his faithful followers, now finds this to be a true criticism. Jesus Christ has not destroyed him, has not blinded him for life, has not simply let him off with a threatening injunction to persecute no more. Jesus Christ has honored him with a high commission. Paul's great longing to prepare the people for the Christ's coming is to be utilized by Jesus, only instead of preparing for it by destroying the Jesus messianic movement he is to be made a great leader in the Jesus movement.

(c) That is, Paul received from Jesus Christ the grace of apostleship (Rom. 1:5). This never ceased to fill his heart with profound gratitude (I Cor. 15:9-10). From this time on Paul thinks of himself as one of a little group of cosmic significance, upon whom the eyes of all the universe are, or ought to be, fastened. He is one of those who have been sent by God into the great arena of the universe just before the break up of the old age, a center of interest

for the whole amphitheatre of heaven and earth; "I think God hath set forth us, the apostles, last of all, as men doomed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, both to angels and men" (I Cor. 4:9).

Paul is thought to say in Gal. 1:16 that he at once knew that he was to be an apostle to Gentiles. He certainly saw, as he looked back upon the event in the light of later developments, that God then purposed to send him to the Gentiles, that this had indeed been God's purpose for him at the time of his birth (Gal. 1:15). The statement in Gal. 1:11-24 is very condensed and may summarize what only gradually became clear. Paul had presumably long felt that the messianic plan of God included the Gentiles (*Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs*, Benj. 9:2; Levi 14:4; *Psalms of Solomon* 17:32), but of course as Jewish proselytes. It is not impossible that when he started out to cleanse the *Ghettos* of foreign cities from the Nazarene pest, he also hoped to win converts to Mosaism from among the Gentiles. There were missionaries of Pharisaism who made long dangerous journeys by land and sea for this purpose (Matt. 23:15). If this was Paul's frame of mind at the time of his conversion it may very well be, as the narrative in Acts seems to imply, that it took him a considerable time to learn from the logic of events the terms on which Gentiles might be included in the Jesus messianic movement.

(d) Paul had a new conception of God as a result of this experience. The unexpected "grace" of the Christ, who was Jesus, the friend of sinners, necessarily revealed unexpected grace in God who sent such a

Christ and endorsed his friendliness by resurrection and exaltation to his own right hand.

(e) With this new conception of the grace of God and his Christ came a new conception of the terms on which God would deal with men through his Christ in the judgment day. Here Paul's experience came directly into evidence, for his experience with Jesus Christ had been a kind of preliminary judgment day. As he had settled down to a thankful, obedient acceptance of the commission of Jesus Christ he found himself in a strangely peaceful frame of mind. Such peace he very well knew could come only to one who had been set right with God. That which had set him right with God was certainly not the deeds of pious law keeping for which he had been famous (Gal. 1: 14; Phil. 3: 6). They had not sufficed to keep him from an unrighteous fight against God's Christ. Without doubt that which had brought him peace was his humble, thankful acceptance of the control which Jesus Christ assumed over his life, that is, his "faith." (See notes, 1: 16-17). He learned through this experience the lesson of righteousness, or rightness with God, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He afterward found this corroborated by the new meaning that he saw in the scriptural description of Abraham's religious experience: "Abraham had faith in God and it was accounted to him righteousness" (cf. Rom. 4: 1-3). He learned here in experience his simple gospel of faith: "The word is nigh thee in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord

and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. 10: 8-9.)

(f) Paul found that faith in Jesus was not an isolated act but a permanent state. The Christ who had appeared to him in his very soul (Gal. 1: 16) did not leave him. Christ's breaking into his inner life out of the spiritual world opened up a permanent connection with the spiritual world. He had an almighty, unchangeable friend in the spiritual world (Rom. 8: 34-35). The powers of the spiritual world began to pour in and operate mightily in him, so that in an ecstatic state he "spoke with tongues" to an unusual degree (I Cor. 14: 18), and could do such remarkable deeds as would be expected of an apostle of the mighty Christ (II Cor. 12: 12). An abiding fellowship with Christ was established in his life, so that he prayed to Christ (II Cor. 12: 8-9), felt that his missionary itinerary was drawn up by Christ (I Thess. 3: 11), and that all his life was vitalized by the presence of Christ (Gal. 2: 20). His whole conception of the Coming Age summed itself up in terms of the continuance of this relation: "So shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4: 17).

(g) It was now almost inevitable that he should change his conception of the function of the law. He realized at once that the men most devoted to the law were flagrantly unrighteous, fighting against God and his Christ. The sense of rightness that followed his interview with Jesus had come to him entirely apart from law. What then was the purpose of law? He may have hesitated at this point in his thought for



a time. Later he reached the startling conclusion that the purpose of God's holy law was not to give men a chance to become righteous by keeping it, but to give the cosmic personalities, one of whom was "Sin," a chance to express to the full their evil disposition in leading flesh men to disobey law and incur death. In this way the law would make men realize their desperate situation and so would turn them to faith as their only resource (Gal. 3:23-24). See pp. 54-57.

(h) It was inevitable also that Paul should at once ask himself why the Messiah should die. He had often heard the persecuted Nazarenes give a reason when he had fiercely flung this question at them. He humbly accepted their answer when he became a Christian and passed it on to others in his preaching: "I delivered unto you among prime truths that which also I received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3). That is, God willed it and foretold it in the scriptures. How the Nazarenes came to find in the scriptures an idea that had escaped the rabbis is not clear. They later attributed the discovery to Jesus himself. (Lk. 24:25-26, 45-46; Mk. 9:12; 14:21.) Paul must at once have asked why God willed it. How long it was before he found a satisfactory reply does not appear. That God could use the death suffering of righteous Jews to "ransom" and "purify" the nation was not an unfamiliar thought, at least in some circles (II Mac. 7:38; 4 Mac. 6:29; 17:21-22; *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs*, Benj. 3:8). To one whose religious thought

rested on sacrificial pre-suppositions it would not have seemed unnatural that God should gather his people about him for a great purifying sacrifice on the threshold of a vast new enterprise like that of the New Age. Paul later emphasized the idea that in Christ's death God was so revealing his love as to reconcile men to himself (e.g., II Cor. 5: 19. See notes on 3: 25 f.). It may at once have occurred to him that God was in this way stimulating the penitence that was requisite to bring Christ from heaven (cf. Acts 3: 19-21). It is sometimes held that to Paul's mind the chief significance of Jesus' death and resurrection lay in the fact that they in some way gave him victory over the great cosmic personalities "Sin" and the "Elements" (Gal. 4: 3, 9, Col. 2: 8, 20). Jesus Christ came into Sin's world of flesh and won decisive victory over them by experiencing without harm to himself the worst that Sin and Death could do. This was because God was with him and by a resurrection from the dead exalted him to a superior place of power from which he could abolish the flesh age of Sin and Death by a world judgment. This is thought to be the meaning even of Rom. 3: 24-26 (e.g., Carré: *Paul's Doctrine of Redemption*). Paul was accustomed to present the subject of Jesus' death and resurrection in several ways. This seems pretty surely to have been one of them. But the evidence hardly warrants the conclusion that it was the only one and that it wholly supplanted the sacrificial analogy which certainly lay close at hand in Jewish and Greco-Roman thought.

(i) Paul's conception of the ethical life may have undergone some change as a result of his Damascus experience. It is clear that his conception of life in the New Age changed somewhat, because Jesus whom he had once abhorred was now recognized as Lord of the New Age, and the ideals of Jesus, so far as Paul understood them, would now necessarily be considered as dominating the Coming Age. This would involve some change in the ethical standards of the present life, not only because the New Age was so near, but because for the Christian the life of faith now as well as in the future was life with Jesus Christ. If Paul before his conversion had approved of the spirit of forgiving love so beautifully taught in the *Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs*, then the necessary change would have been principally one of elimination. Certain features of his ethical ideal would have been shorn off. His ideal would have been simplified. It must have immediately become evident to him that, neither in the Coming Age nor at present, was the demand of the rabbis for the punctilious observance of their interpretation of the Mosaic law an essential part of the true ethical ideal, for Jesus was understood to have been against this. What Jesus' attitude toward the Mosaic law really was is another question, but it seems certain that he was understood to have been against certain interpretations of the law that seemed to the rabbis fundamentally important. Paul finally came to the place where the life of love seemed to him to be the comprehensive designation of the true ethical ideal (Gal. 5: 14; I Cor. 13; Rom. 13: 8-

10), which was also the teaching of Jesus (Mt. 22:35-40.) The simplification of his ethical ideal by a process of elimination may have required considerable time, but it must have begun as an immediate consequence of his interview with Jesus.

### 2. PAUL THE AUTHOR OF ROMANS.

About 150 A. D. Marcion (see p. 63) made what he conceived to be an expurgated collection of the writings of Paul comprising ten letters, among them Romans. He regarded these letters as having an already established Pauline reputation in the church. The Pauline authorship of Romans, clearly recognized at this early date, remained unquestioned for centuries. The revolutionary conclusions of Ferdinand Christian Baur, the Tübingen professor of church history, regarding the authorship and dates of most of the New Testament books, still assigned Romans, First and Second Corinthians, and Galatians without question to Paul. Some twenty years after Baur's death a small group of scholars chiefly in Holland, began to deny the Pauline authorship of all the New Testament writings attributed to him. These scholars consider the "Pauline" letters to have been written in the second century (Romans perhaps about 120) in the name of a certain "Paul" who had been an influential missionary in the early years and whose memory was revered in the second century but about whom we know very little. These second century authors tried to write these letters as they imagined Paul would have written in his own day but they

bungled their work. They attributed to the Paul of the first century ideas that were current in their own day but that Paul himself, it is alleged, could not have held.

These Dutch scholars were followed later (after 1900) by a small group (e.g., W. B. Smith in America, J. M. Robertson in England, and Arthur Drews in Germany) who sought to lift Christian experience above the uncertainties incident to the sphere of history by denying that Jesus Christ was an historical character. This view of course does not necessitate a denial of the Paulinity of the Pauline letters. It seems to some of these writers possible to hold that Paul himself did not regard Jesus Christ as an historical character.

This modern school of criticism has not gained the assent even of those who are ordinarily considered to be very radical New Testament scholars. It has, however, been an incentive to a more thorough investigation of the social and religious environment of early Christianity which is beginning to produce exceedingly valuable results. The Jewish and Greco-Roman environment of early Christianity, which these patient investigations are bringing out into clearer light, is more and more turning out to be one in which the principal Pauline letters, when assigned to the fifth, sixth or seventh decade of the first century, seem thoroughly at home.

Furthermore it seems absolutely impossible to picture a man or a group of men in the second century who could assume the rôle of such a Paul as appears in

these letters. Such writers would not naturally have attributed to him the unrealized expectation of living to see the Lord's return nor the vigorous attack on Peter described in Gal. 2:11-14. They could not have simulated the intense passion, the extreme sensitiveness, the swift alternations of censure and tender appeal that appear in Galatians and the two Corinthian letters.\* Romans is more dispassionate than the other three, but it has been rightly recognized that, whatever may be said about the unity of Romans (see pp. 63, 70, 71), its essential Paulinity stands or falls with that of the other three.

\* Case, *The Historicity of Jesus*, pp. 178-199; Bacon, *Galatians*, pp. 7-11.

## II. THE CHURCH IN ROME

### I. THE JEWS IN ROME.

According to Philo, the Alexandrian Jew and older contemporary of Paul, in the reign of Augustus Caesar (d. 14 A. D.) there were Jews occupying "the great division of Rome which is on the other side of the river Tiber." "They were mostly Roman citizens, having been emancipated; for having been brought as captives into Italy, they were manumitted by those who had bought them for slaves, without ever having been compelled to alter any of their hereditary or national observances." "They had synagogues" which they visited "most especially on the sacred sabbath days" (*To Caius*, 23). It is probable that many of these Jews had been brought to Rome by Pompey soon after he captured Jerusalem in 63 B. C. However there must have been a considerable number of Jews in Rome before that time, for when Cicero in his defence of Flaccus about 59 B. C. in Rome found it necessary to make some uncomplimentary statements about Jews, he was seriously embarrassed by the presence of a large number of them in his audience. They were very skilful, he said, in working up popular clamor against any one who became the object of their dislike. (*Pro Flacco* 28.)

Perhaps there had been Jews in the city even as far back as the middle of the second century B. C.,

when the Maccabean leaders were sending messages from Palestine to the Roman senate (1 Mac. 8, 12, 14, 15).

An indication of the actual size of the Jewish settlement in Rome is found in the fact that when in the year 4 B. C. a delegation of fifty Jews from Palestine visited Rome, they were joined by more than 8,000 Jews, presumably men, resident in Rome (Josephus, *Ant.* 17: 11: 1, *War* 2: 6: 1). Zahn argues from this a total population of more than 30,000, which seems a moderate estimate. Later (19 A. D.) under Tiberius, as punishment 4,000 Jews in Rome, evidently young men of military age, were enlisted in the army and sent to unhealthful regions, while a large additional number of military age were otherwise punished (Josephus, *Ant.* 18: 3: 5; cf. Suetonius, *Lives of the Emperors*, Tiberius 36). This would indicate a total population considerably larger than 30,000.

The Jews did not live exclusively in the Trastevere, at least not in Juvenal's day (100 A. D.), but were found also across the river in the city (*Sat.* 3). Jewish cemeteries have been discovered elsewhere than in the Trastevere (Schürer, Sanday-Headlam).

### 2. EARLY CHRISTIANS IN ROME.

(1) Very likely Jews from Rome making the annual religious pilgrimages to Jerusalem had become Christians there. Such "sojourning Romans" are represented to have been in Jerusalem on the famous "day of Pentecost" (Acts 2: 10). As soon as Gentile con-



verts began to be numerous in the cities of the Levant they would be constantly drifting into Rome on the currents of trade and travel.

(2) The earliest distinct evidence of Christians in Rome is the statement of Paul in Rom. 15:23 that he had been hoping "for these many years" to visit the Christians there, and the statement in Acts 18:1-3 that a Jew named Aquila and his wife Priscilla were among the Jews recently compelled by edict of the Emperor Claudius (41-54 A. D.) to leave Rome. The reason for thinking them to have been Christians before leaving Rome is the fact that, although they began at once to associate with Paul in Corinth, they are nowhere spoken of as his converts.

To be considered in connection with this passage in Acts is the statement in Suetonius (100 A. D. *Lives of the Emperors*, Claudius, 25): "Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he (the Emperor Claudius) expelled them from Rome." "Chrestus" may be "Christus," and the statement an unintelligent reference to the message about Christ that was agitating the Jewish community in Rome. The exact date of this expulsion is uncertain. It cannot have been at the beginning of the reign of Claudius (41 A. D.), for at that time he issued a general edict of toleration for all the Jews of the empire (Josephus, *Ant.* 19:5:2-3). Orosius, a Spanish Christian historian of the fifth century, gives the date as the ninth year of Claudius, 49 A. D. Dio Cassius speaks of an expulsion of the Jews from Rome by Claudius which it was impracticable to enforce

and which was reduced to the prohibition of public meetings. In any case those who left the city were doubtless soon back again. The fact that Priscilla and Aquila seem to have stayed away several years (I Cor. 16:19) is perhaps an indication that they were regarded as leaders in the disturbances of the *Ghetto* and so found it difficult to return.

The statements in Acts and Suetonius do not indicate how many Christians there were in Rome. A very few determined Christian agitators could keep the whole *Ghetto* in a ferment and produce such noisy disturbances among their excitable fellow countrymen on the street and in the synagogue as would result in the Emperor's order to the police to clear the *Ghetto*. Neither do these statements show that the Christian group of this early period was predominantly Jewish. There may have been many Gentile Christians scattered through the city and its suburbs who had no direct connection with the Christian propaganda being attempted by a few Christian Jews in the *Ghetto*. According to Acts 28:21-22 the Christian movement had made very little impression on the leaders of the *Ghetto* at the time when Paul finally reached Rome. It would seem to have become largely a Gentile movement by that time. Paul's letter to the Romans makes the same impression. (See pp. 29-32.)

(3) Was Peter in Rome during these early years? Evidence that Peter was at some time in Rome appears with distinctness a little before and after the year 200 A. D., in Asia Minor (*Acts of Peter*), in Corinth (Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, quoted by Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.*

2:25:8), in Rome (Caius, quoted by Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* 2:25:6; Hippolytus, *Ref. Her.* 6:15), in Gaul (Irenaeus, *Ag. Her.* 3:1:1, 3:3:2), in Alexandria (Clement, quoted by Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* 6:14:6), in North Africa (Tertullian, e.g., *Against Marcion* 4:5). It may possibly be inferred from allusions at an earlier date, a little before and after 100 A. D. (1 Pet. 5:13, if "Babylon" is Rome; Clement of Rome, *Corinthians* 5-6; Ignatius, *To the Romans* 4:1; Papias, in Eusebius, *Ch. Hist.* 2:15:2).

It seems clear that Peter was not the "founder" of the church in Rome in the sense that he first preached Christ there. In some of the passages cited above that speak of Peter as founding the church, the same function is ascribed to Paul. Caius, a member of the church in Rome, speaks of "trophies of the apostles" (places where they were executed or buried) in Rome as "trophies of those who laid the foundations of this church"; and Irenæus says that Matthew issued a Gospel "while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundations of the church." Yet Irenæus must have known from Rom. 1:13, 15:22 that the church had been in existence before Paul visited Rome. Probably any church that had been visited by an apostle was thought of as an apostolic foundation. Dionysius of Corinth, in the passage referred to above, claims Peter as well as Paul as a founder of the Corinthian church; "both of them planted and likewise taught us in our Corinth."

If Peter did preach in Rome had he done so before Paul wrote Romans? In Rom. 15:20 Paul speaks

of unwillingness to build on another man's foundation. Professor Lake in his very valuable book, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul* (p. 379), thinks that Paul is giving this as a reason for not having visited Rome and that the other man may have been Peter, who had therefore already been in Rome, though not necessarily as absolutely the first preacher there. However Paul's unwillingness to build on another man's foundation seems to be mentioned by him as an interesting characteristic of all his previous preaching from Jerusalem to Illyricum (15: 19) rather than as an explanation of his failure to come to Rome. What had kept him from Rome was not some fixed, steadily operating circumstance like the fact of Peter's supposed work there, for in that case it would not be natural for him to say that he had "*oftentimes* purposed to come" (1: 13). Such language implies a variety of hindering circumstances no one of which now finally remains.

Furthermore the Roman church, at the time when Paul wrote Romans, was predominantly Gentile (see pp. 29-32). Therefore Peter had not been true to his agreement with Paul, which was to preach his characteristic Jewish gospel only among Jews (Gal. 2: 7-9), if he had founded and developed this church since that agreement was made. It might, of course, be that the church had ceased to be Jewish and become strongly Gentile since Peter had last visited it, or that he had worked in Rome before the agreement of Gal. 2: 7-9 was made, but neither of these suppositions seems quite probable. If Peter had very early preached in Rome and in other cities which he would

presumably have visited on his journey from Palestine to Rome and back, some trace of such evangelization might naturally be expected in Acts. The demands of the evidence connecting Peter with Rome are best met by supposing that Peter was in Rome at a later time, perhaps on several occasions, and suffered martyrdom there. Changed conditions in the late fifties and early sixties had rendered the agreement of Gal. 2:7-9 obsolete.

### 3. THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH IN ROME AT THE TIME WHEN ROMANS WAS WRITTEN.

#### (1) *Their nationality.*

There has been much discussion during the last hundred years as to whether the readers were predominantly Jewish or Gentile. Among the older scholars Baur argued that the readers of this letter must have been predominantly Jewish, while Weizsäcker and Pfleiderer considered them to have been predominantly Gentile. Among later scholars the Gentile character of the church has been widely maintained (e.g., Sanday-Headlam, Lütgert, Jülicher, B. Weiss), while Zahn is the most thorough-going advocate of the Jewish membership. Professor Lake holds that both Jews and Gentiles were probably largely represented in the membership.

It is almost certain that any church in a great city at this time would contain Jews. That there were Jews among the Christians in Rome is clear if chapter 16 is an integral part of the letter (see p. 70), for individual Jews are mentioned in 16:3, 7, 11. However,

the evidence in favor of a predominantly Gentile membership seems conclusive. Paul justifies himself for writing to them on the ground that he is the apostle to Gentiles (1: 5, 13; 11: 13; 15: 15-16). He assumes that his readers think that God has excluded the Jewish nation from participation in the Jesus messianic movement (11: 1, 17-19), an assumption that they would not naturally make if there had been any considerable Jewish element in their own church. Furthermore, in opposing this assumption Paul does not point to a Jewish element in the Roman church, but instead cites the fact that God has made him, a Jew, the leader in Gentile evangelization and that God has a faithful Jewish remnant apparently scattered here and there like the seven thousand in Elijah's day (11: 2-5).

Certain passages cited to prove that the readers were largely Jewish are intelligible on the other theory. The fact that in chapter 2 the Jew is directly addressed ("If thou bearest the name Jew," 2: 17) may seem to indicate that Paul was here directly addressing Jewish readers, but this cannot be the case for the persons described in the following sentences (21-24) are evidently not Christians at all. In this chapter Paul is making a rhetorical appeal to the Jewish nation. The pertinence of such an appeal in this letter will become apparent in the discussion of the purpose of the letter. The language in 4: 1 (cf. 9: 10), "What then shall we say that Abraham our forefather hath found," is often thought to imply a considerable body of Jews among the readers with whom Paul classifies himself

by saying "we" and "our." This passage taken by itself might, of course, be so interpreted, but not when account is taken of Paul's attitude in the whole epistle. His general attitude is that of a thoroughly loyal Jew (9: 1-5) asserting to Gentile readers the present primacy before God of his own Jewish race (11: 17-18; cf. 1: 16, 2: 10). Here in 4: 1 he classifies himself with the Jewish nation by saying "our forefathers" and classifies himself with the Gentile readers by saying "we." It is as if a thoroughly loyal Frenchman thinking of himself as a Frenchman, emphasizing the glorious past of France in an address before an American audience should refer to La Fayette and his French contemporaries as "our forefathers." "What shall we say of the services that our forefathers rendered to the cause of American liberty?" This same attitude comes out also in 10: 1 where he speaks to his readers as Gentiles about Jews: "Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them." In 7: 1, "I speak to those who know the law," the Greek has no article before law. He is writing to Romans who "know law."

In 7: 4 it might seem that the persons addressed had previously been under "the law," that is the Mosaic law, as Jews. (So Zahn.) But the point there is that the Mosaic law as an institution of the present age had been binding upon all who belonged to the present age, Gentile (2: 15) as well as Jew, and that now through connection with Christ in his death, they, whether Gentile or Jew, have already virtually died out of the age to which the Mosaic law belongs.



The acquaintance with the Old Testament assumed in the letter does not indicate Jewish readers. Some Gentile Christians had regularly attended the synagogue service before becoming Christians and had gained there an acquaintance with the Jewish Scriptures. Other Gentile Christians found in the scriptures the basis for the messianic hope and at once became familiar with their contents.

It is sometimes argued that the classes described in chapters 14-15 as "weak" and "strong," are Jewish and Gentile Christians. Against this view see the comments on those chapters.

The injunction to obey the civil authorities (13: 1-7) is sometimes thought to be particularly applicable to Jews, always more or less resentful of foreign rule. But Gentile Christians looking for the speedy dawn of the New Age would also be tempted to think lightly of present civil authority. A similar injunction appears in the first Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (chs. 60-61) written some decades later to Gentile Christians.

(2) *Their social standing.*

Many of the names in ch. 16 are names that appear in inscriptions as names of slaves and freedmen (Lightfoot, Sanday-Headlam). The "households" of Aristobulus and Narcissus (10, 11) would naturally include slaves. No lack of intelligence on the part of the readers can be inferred from this fact, for slaves were often better educated than their masters. Probably the readers were in the main middle and lower class



people, as in Corinth (I Cor. 1:26). We find ourselves wondering whether the average Roman Christian got much from a letter that we find it so difficult to understand. Allowance needs to be made for the fact that the questions discussed and much of Paul's phraseology may have been already familiar to the readers. "Doctrinal" sermons preached a century ago by the New England theologians, which seem unintelligible to the average church member today, were at the time discussed with zest by the New England farmers.

### (3) *Organization of the church.*

In ch. 16 it appears that the Christians were to a certain extent located in groups (vs. 10, 11, 14, 15) and that Prisca and Aquila had a house large enough to entertain what was called a "church" (v. 8). In 12:6-8 certain functions are described, some of which seem to be administrative and systematically exercised, while others like prophecy are impulsive. Whether these various groups scattered through the city and its suburbs were unified in a single organization with officers does not definitely appear. The very fact that a letter could be addressed to all the Christians as a body and that messages could be sent to different individuals, implies the existence of certain responsible persons to receive the letter and convey the messages. Since the church seems to have been formed in a rather haphazard way it may not have had so compact an organization as that to be found in the churches in Thessalonica and Corinth, which Paul had himself definitely organized. (I Thess. 5:12-14; cf. Acts 14:23.)

### III. THE DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

The relative time of writing is clear. Paul after "many years" (15:23) of preaching the gospel to Gentiles now felt that he had established this gospel in large Gentile cities all the way from Jerusalem and neighboring parts of the world to the Adriatic, or to the province of Illyricum that constituted the eastern Adriatic coast (15:18-19). He is planning to found a Spanish mission on the western edge of the world. (15:22-23.) He has completed the collection of a sum of money from the Gentile Christians of Macedonia and Achaia for the poor of the Jewish Christian church in Jerusalem, and is just about to start with it for Jerusalem (15:25-27). From Jerusalem he will begin his journey to Spain via Rome (15:28). We find other allusions to this collection in Paul's extant correspondence of this period. It appears that the Gentile churches of Galatia were included among the donors (I Cor. 16:1), and probably also those of the province of Asia (cf. Acts 20:4). The chief source of information about this collection is II Cor. 8-9, written by Paul a little while before the letter to the Romans, for in these chapters the collection, completed in Romans, is near to completion (II Cor. 8:1-4; 9:1-5). At the time when these chapters were written Paul himself was in Macedonia expecting soon to come to Corinth (II Cor. 9:2-4). Such a journey is men-

tioned in Acts 20: 1-3, in which just before starting for Syria he spent three months in Greece, presumably much of the time in Corinth. Therefore Romans was probably written in Corinth. If ch. 16 is a part of the letter (see pp. 70-75), the reference in 16:1 to Cenchreae, one of the harbor towns of Corinth, is significant. The Gaius mentioned in 16: 23 might be identified with the Corinthian Gaius (I Cor. 1: 14), and Erastus possibly with the Erastus of II Tim. 4: 20. Therefore the date of the letter was somewhere between 54 and 58 A. D. according to the scheme of Pauline chronology that one might choose to adopt.

#### IV. THE PURPOSE OF THE LETTER

Paul intended Romans to be a document that should hasten the end of the present age. It was to be a unification platform on which all who were to be saved from "the wrath" in the messianic judgment must quickly take their stand and so produce a situation that would draw the Lord from heaven to introduce the New Age. In order to recognize the justification for this statement it is necessary to see as clearly as possible the world situation as it appeared to Paul.

At the time of writing Romans Paul was possessed, as he had been for years, by a single passionate desire. It was to see the world in such a condition that the one whom he had learned to call the Lord Jesus Christ would come down from the heavenly spirit world, end this present evil, death-smitten flesh age and by a resurrection of the dead begin the New Spirit Age. This consummation seemed to him not far distant (13:11-12). Before this could happen, however, certain changes must take place on the earth: It was the will of God that Israel should be first brought to repentance, and a certain percentage at least of the Gentile world be prepared for the salvation of the New Age (11:15, 25-26). These two results must be speedily secured. Paul himself had by God's grace been made the unrivaled leader in securing such a change in the Gentile world as would lead to the great

event. His prime interest, however, was still in his own nation. His vigorous prosecution of Gentile evangelization found its motive partly in his desire to make the Jews so jealous of the Gentile Christians that they would themselves become Christians: "Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles I glorify my ministry, if by any means I may provoke to jealousy them that are my flesh and may save some of them." If this could be accomplished the Lord would come to resurrect the dead and begin the New Age. "For if the casting away of them (the Jews) is the reconciling of the world what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead." (11: 13-15; see notes.)

As a matter of fact, however, this program that Paul felt must soon and certainly be carried out before the New Age could begin seemed to halt. The Jewish nation as a whole was bitterly opposed to the Jesus messianic movement, especially as conceived by Paul and, what was equally unfortunate, there was very little real Christian sympathy between the few Jews who had become Christians and the great body of Gentile Christians. It was this lack of harmony within the Christian body itself that caused him most immediate distress.

It was not strange that these two elements declined to fuse. The Jews had long felt that God had given them a monopoly of true religion, that God had made them the sole custodians of his holy law (2: 17-20), that the day would come when the Jew would be the supreme power in the earth (4: 13), and be able to compel everyone to keep the Mosaic law or be destroyed.

The New Age was to be an age of devout keeping of the Mosaic law. When Jewish Christians saw multitudes of Gentiles joining the Jesus movement and looking forward to full participation in the glories of the New Age without having any special regard for the Mosaic law, many of them profoundly resented it. It seemed to them that the promise of the New Age had been made to Jews who kept God's holy law and that foreigners who hoped to share in the New Age—as many indeed might—must of course be incorporated into the body of law-keeping Jews to whom the New Age had been promised. There were doubtless various shades of opinion among Jewish Christians regarding the relation of Gentile Christians to the holy law, just as in the pre-Christian period there had been various opinions among orthodox Jews regarding the relation of Jehovah-worshiping Gentiles in the synagogue to the Mosaic law. (See p. 7.) But there was a very influential element among Jewish Christians that felt bitter over Gentile Christianity and that regarded Paul as a selfish, ambitious renegade. This element would have exulted over news of his death. A larger element, though not bitter, felt very uncomfortable over the situation, especially as the number of Gentile converts increased by leaps and bounds while the Christian propaganda among Jews made little progress. They could not bear to see the current of the Jesus movement setting so strongly away from the holy law of Moses.

On the other hand very many Gentile Christians did not feel drawn to Jewish Christians. Most of

those who before they became Christians had not been attendants upon the synagogue services as Jehovah-worshipping Gentiles ("devout Greeks" Acts 17:4), cherished the widespread prejudice against all Jews. They were decided anti-semites. When they became Christians they did not lay aside this prejudice. When a white man who has a strong antipathy to the black race becomes a Christian, he does not instantly seek close affiliation with African Christians. Furthermore, these Gentile Christians saw clearly that the Christian movement had become largely a Gentile affair and they therefore concluded that God had cast off his people. As will appear later, they thought that Paul, who gave himself exclusively to Gentile evangelization, agreed with them in this opinion. They looked superciliously down upon the small Jewish minority as insignificant and rather out of place in the Christian movement. These Gentile Christians valued the Jewish scriptures because of their antiquity and straightway took possession of them. Any religion needed ancient scriptures. The chief value of the Jewish scriptures in their opinion, however, probably consisted in the scriptural record of God's appearances and in the remarkable non-racial messianic prophecies to which Paul called their attention. Moses' law seemed to them a collection of tribal customs given by God to Jews, but not interesting to Gentiles except in so far as they could be allegorically interpreted.

A startling tendency to go further than this had sprung up here and there among Gentile Christians.

The Mosaic law laid great stress on sexual chastity. Some Gentile Christians were beginning to say that there was no ethical value in personal chastity. In the life of the day the idea was widely current that the sexual appetite is in the same class with the appetite for food and may with perfect propriety be as promiscuously gratified. Some converts did not revolt from this traditional pre-supposition when they became Christians. Paul found it necessary to protest against this view in the church with which he was staying when he wrote Romans (I Cor. 6:9-17).

Now in order to bring the preparation for the Lord's coming speedily to a close Paul was planning to do three things. (1) He proposed to establish his last great Gentile mission in the rich Romanized civilization of Spain, and so practically complete the evangelization of the Gentile world. He may have thought that Christian evangelization could proceed swiftly from Spain to centers in Gaul and Britain. His language in Rom. 15:19 shows that he was not looking for any thorough evangelization of all the individuals in the world. He thought in terms of provinces (e.g., I Cor. 16:1; II Cor. 8:1; 9:2; Rom. 16:5). Such swift establishment of the gospel in centers as had characterized his evangelization of the East now completed (15:19), might also be accomplished within a very few years in the less populous regions of Spain, Gaul and Britain. This would amply meet what he conceived to be the demands of the task of Gentile evangelization laid upon him in preparation for his Lord's coming.



(2) For several years he had been working personally and through agents to gather a large sum of money from the Gentile Churches to be carried by a committee of their members (I Cor. 16: 3) to the great Jewish mother church in Jerusalem. He hoped in this practical way to overcome the anti-semitic spirit among Gentile Christians and to abate the Jewish prejudice against liberal Gentile Christianity. This would be a decided step forward in preparation for the Lord's coming. He was not certain of success, but with his usual optimism he hoped, and was endeavoring to enlist the prayers of the Roman Christians (Rom. 15: 30-31).

(3) Just at this critical juncture in the process of securing such a situation on the earth as would lead God to send his Son from heaven, he prepared with great care a document calculated to contribute largely to this end. He prepared a platform on which, as it seemed to him, all Christians must come together, and afterward be joined by the great mass of the Jewish nation in readiness for the New Age. This platform is the letter to the Romans. It does not present a full statement of Paul's Christian teaching, but in the main only those points regarding which Jew and Gentile might find it difficult to agree.

Before discussing the nature of this platform it is in place to show with what purpose such a platform was just at this time sent to the Roman Christians rather than to others. Paul wished the church in Rome to identify itself with this unification platform because the church in Rome would be the natural supporter

of all evangelization carried on in the regions west of Rome, just as the Antioch church had for a time been his base of supplies at an earlier period. The work in Spain and Gaul would need sympathy and prayer, friendly visitors and evangelists from the church in Rome. Especially if Paul should be assassinated in Jerusalem within the next few months as he feared (Rom. 15:31), and with good reason (Acts 20:3; 23:12-13), that he might be, there would be great need that Christians in Rome should push on into the West with this statement of the Gospel, which seemed to Paul the only one that could prevail. He knew that there was some prejudice against him in Rome because, although he had several times come as near to them as Corinth, he had hitherto failed to visit them (Rom. 1:8-13; 15:22-24). He knew also that the Christian "ministers of Satan" (II Cor. 11:13-15), who had recently misrepresented him and his gospel in Corinth, would doubtless try to do the same thing in Rome, especially when they learned of his extensive plan for work in Spain.

There was therefore very great reason for putting on deposit with the Christians at Rome just at this juncture a full, careful, conciliatory statement of certain fundamental features of Paul's gospel.

Such a statement would of course be useful in other places than Rome. Evidence will be noted later (p. 68) for the conjecture that the main body of the letter went also to other places, but Rome was the place of strategic importance, both because Rome had not had the advantage of Paul's personal preaching as

other places had, and because Rome could do what no other church could do for the immediate evangelization of the unevangelized West.

It was suitable also from this point of view that Paul should make the most of all possible points of personal contact with the church, as he does in the long list of personal greetings in ch. 16.

It is not at all inconsistent with what has been said about the purpose of the letter, to see in ch. 14 a reference to certain local conditions in Rome which it might be Paul's purpose to correct. The situation there described, however, was one that might also arise in almost any Gentile church at any time (see notes).

## V. THE MAIN IDEAS OF THE LETTER

What are the principal articles in this platform of unification, and what was their application to the general situation?

1. After an introduction, in which Paul dissipates any possible suspicion that he did not sufficiently appreciate the importance of the Roman Christians (1:8-9) and had not cared enough for them to pay them a visit until now that he had a chance to use them (1:10-13), he introduces his first great idea which runs through five chapters: *God in great love has long planned, as we know from the prophets, to declare men righteous, that is, fit for the salvation of the New Age, in view of their belief, or faith, in Jesus Christ, who died for them, a method of procedure needed by everyone, Jew as well as Gentile, and available for everyone, Gentile as well as Jew, without subjection to the details of the Mosaic law.*

The civilization of great Gentile cities, with its hideous and abnormal vices openly recognized, shows the world's need of something to make it fit for the judgment that is the gateway into the New Age (1:18-32). The Jew, who stands as the venerable critic of the world's unrighteousness, is himself unfit for the judgment (2:1-29). He has a dark record. He cannot claim that God's favor in making him custodian of the law of Moses guarantees his acquittal in the judgment

day, for God has also deposited the substance of the same law with the Gentiles—in their hearts (2: 13–15)—and certainly the Gentiles are not fit for the judgment! Nothing but doing the law could help the one who relies on it as his sufficient friend in the judgment day (2: 17–29).

To be sure it has been a great advantage to the Jew through all the generations to possess the sacred scriptures, for they contain the messianic promises, but this advantage has not made him fit to survive the judgment and pass on into the New Age (3: 1–9). His own scriptures fairly loathe his conduct (3: 10–19)! Law, in the very nature of the case, can never fit flesh for the salvation of the New Age of spirit (3: 20).

God has long been revealing through the prophets a way of fitting all willing men for the New Age. It is the way of penitent, obedient faith in Jesus Christ, whose bloody death at the end of the old age is the monumental witness to God's righteous and forgiving love, available for all who in penitent faith obey Jesus as Lord (3: 21–30). Such men of penitent faith are the only ones who find themselves able to realize in conduct the ethical ideal of God's holy law (3: 31). (On the meaning of faith see notes on 1: 1, 16).

The proud Jewish nation, now holding aloof from the Jesus messianic movement, must recognize and adopt this way of faith. Great Jews like Abraham and David knew no other way. Are ordinary Jews better than they? (4: 1–12.) In Abraham's case it was faith alone that won from God the messianic

promise of a world. It is faith alone on the part of Abraham's descendants (and believing Gentiles also are such) that can claim the promise in the New Age (4: 13-25). It is faith in Jesus Christ that is the way for all into peaceful, triumphant, steadfast waiting in the midst of afflictions for the glory of the New Age (5: 1-11). Jesus Christ is the founder of a new race, the deathless race of the New Age, which will displace the death-smitten race that Adam introduced (5: 12-19). Law made the perverse race of Adam, not better but worse, that God might have a better opportunity to show in mightier fashion the way of faith (5: 20-21).

2. *The second of the main ideas* of the unification platform runs through chapters 6-8. In chs. 1-5 allusion has been made to the function of the Mosaic law (3: 20, 31; 5: 20), and now in chs. 6-8 Paul takes up the question for more thorough discussion. It is one of the most delicate points in his gospel. On the one hand he wishes Gentile Christians to respect the ethical ideals of the law without subjecting themselves to its details—which he knows most of them would never do. On the other hand he wishes Jewish Christians and orthodox Jews to see that the valuable function which the law has to perform is very different from that which the traditional Jewish theology ascribes to it. He wishes to increase the respect of Gentile Christians for the law, without inducing them to become dependent upon it as a means of securing approval in the judgment day. He wishes to change the attitude of Jews, both Christian and non-Christian, toward it so that, with-

out abating their respect for it, they may at least recognize the liberty of Gentile Christians not to obey its details—whatever is to be the practice of Jewish Christians themselves in this particular.

Lütgert has clearly shown that the dominant note in the discussion of this difficult question is one of warning addressed directly to Gentile Christians. It is not one of *apology* and *explanation* to critical Jewish Christians who wrongly suppose that Paul's gospel encourages sin. It is *exhortation* (6: 11–12, 19; 8: 12–15) to Gentile Christians who are in danger of sinning and who are inclined gladly to assume that Paul's gospel gives them warrant for doing so. These Gentile Christians must realize that sin, against which the holy law of Moses protests, has no place in the life of faith. The recent development of licentiousness in the Gentile Christian church (I Cor. 5–6) has shocked Paul and made him realize the necessity of urging strenuously upon all Gentile Christians respect for the ethical standards of Moses' law.

The main idea that runs through chs. 6–8 is this: *Men who have started in God's way of righteousness by believing in Jesus Christ have already been laid hold of by the powers of the Coming Age of spirit, and must therefore surely break with Sin which reigns in this present age of flesh (6: 1–7: 6). They can and must attain to the ethical ideal that the holy law of Moses held up but could never enforce (7: 6–8: 17, especially 8: 1–4). Their present victorious alliance with the spirit world guarantees them a glorious life with Christ in the Coming Age of spirit (8: 18–39).*

This main idea is worked out in detail. Faith in Christ, who through death, burial and resurrection has passed into the sinless spirit world, involves a vital union with him, which virtually carries us also into that sinless region as our initiatory baptism teaches (6: 1-11). Gentile Christians must not argue that their bodies, which belong to this flesh age and will soon disappear in its break-up, can therefore in the meantime be used as agents of Sin without detriment to the spirit (6: 12-14). Such use of the body or its "members" in the service of Sin is not to be thought of by those who, although they are not to be sure, keeping the Mosaic law, have become servants of God, and are just about to begin the life of the New Age (6: 15-23).

The men of faith have virtually died out of the sphere of flesh, in which the law operates, but they are not, therefore, left without any ethical restraint. They are living with their Lord in the spirit world and must serve God there (7: 1-6).

Then follows a defence of the law which consists in showing what its true function is. This defence is against the criticisms passed upon the law by many Gentile Christians, who wrongly think that Paul agrees with them. Many Jews, too, both Christians and non-Christians suppose that Paul holds the view of the law wrongly attributed to him by this section of Gentile Christians.

These Gentile Christians criticize the law as being itself a sinful agency (7: 7) belonging, as Paul himself teaches (7: 5-6), in the age of flesh dominated by Sin.



Paul resents this misinterpretation of his teaching. The law does indeed belong in Sin's flesh age and it cannot make anyone righteous. It is not, however, a sinful agency. It is a holy and righteous (7:12) device of God put down into the flesh age, not to make men righteous directly, but to make them realize how badly off they really are (7:7-12).

The Gentile Christian critic of the law replies that anyway, according to Paul's own teaching, the law, however good it may be, produces death (7:13). It is a deadly thing and therefore must be absolutely shunned. On the contrary, Paul says, it is not the law but Sin that produces death, Sin which the Gentile Christian does not hate as he should. The law is something that holds up the ideals of the spirit world (7:14a) and thereby reveals the presence and deadly nature of Sin. This, however, is all that the law can do. It can produce conflict between the higher and lower elements of personality, in which conflict the lower elements prevail and produce despair. The law cannot give victory (7:13-25). Victory comes through alliance with the mighty powers of the spirit world into which Jesus Christ has gone, an alliance which is ours because in faith we are vitally attached to his personality and walk with him in the spirit world. Through this alliance comes power to realize the ethical ideal presented by the law (8:4), which is the life of love (cf. 13:8-10).

The Gentile Christian therefore must profoundly respect the ethical ideal of the Mosaic law, though he sees that the law is powerless to help him realize

its ideal and that the law is an institution whose details are shaped to the flesh age to which he no longer belongs. The Jew too, of course, must take this view of the Mosaic law. Whatever he may see fit to do about this or that detail of the law now, he must recognize that these details are not to prevail in the Coming Age. The perfection of righteousness which is to characterize that Age will not consist in the perfect obedience to all details of Moses' law urged by the rabbis. Only its ethical ideal, love, will dominate the New Age of spirit (cf. I Cor. 13: 13).

The Gentile Christians on the border land of the flesh and spirit worlds, but in victorious alliance with the powers of the spirit world, must not yield to Sin in the flesh, but must look forward with steadfast confidence to the dawning of the New Age, certain that God will give them its glory since nothing can separate them from the love of God in Jesus Christ (8: 12-39).

3. *The third of the main ideas* in Paul's unification platform is found in chs. 9-11. It concerns the present and prospective attitude of the Jewish nation to the Jesus messianic movement. These chapters are to be understood as addressed to Gentile Christians who think that God has abandoned the Jews, giving them as a nation no part in the Jesus messianic movement, and who think that Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, the object of his nation's scorn, also holds this opinion. They believe that God must have long planned to cast the Jewish nation off because of its perversity, otherwise the present vigorous and vicious Jewish opposition to the Christian movement would

necessitate the impossible conclusion that God's plan to include them had gone awry (9:6). Paul himself has been known to recognize the extreme viciousness of Jewish antagonism to Christianity in language that might be interpreted to describe the hopelessness of their condition (I Thess. 2:14-16). His recent bitter conflict with Jewish antagonists in Corinth (II Cor. 11:13-22) might easily be supposed to have confirmed his natural antagonism to his nation. In general Paul's line of thought is this: *The present generation of Jews has been in the main cast off by God, in accordance with his well-established policy of introducing messianic salvation by a mysterious process of apparently arbitrary selection (9:1-29). They have been left to persist obstinately in their fatal devotion to righteousness by law. (9:30-10:21.) Yet God has not cast off the nation as a whole. He will use the triumphs of the Gospel among the Gentiles to stir up the jealousy of his chosen people to whom, in the persons of the fathers, he once for all long ago gave pre-eminence in the messianic plan. Their speedy turning to the Jesus movement will end the present age (ch. 11).*

After solemnly disclaiming the hostile attitude toward his nation that Gentile Christians attribute to him (9:1-5; cf. 10:1-2) Paul gives his explanation of the present strange phenomenon. The present situation of the nation is simply another instance of God's well-established policy, namely, to prepare for messianic salvation by the apparently arbitrary selection of some and the passing over of others. God has simply passed over the present generation of Jews.

He passed over certain patriarchal families (9: 7-13) and the large obdurate majority in Isaiah's day (9: 27-29). It may seem to some Gentile Christians wrong to ascribe this policy of arbitrary selection to a righteous God (9: 14). They may think it would be better to say that the Jews as a nation are so bad that God has cast them off. But the scripture certainly does ascribe arbitrary selection to him (9: 15-18), and no one may be so presumptuous as to criticize his methods (9: 19-21).

The terrible fault of this generation of Jews, itself the evidence that God has passed them by, is the fact that they would not adopt the unification platform which this letter presents, namely the platform of righteousness through faith (9: 30-10: 4)—faith clear, simple, widely proclaimed (10: 5-18).

But God has not cast off the nation as a whole (11: 1-2). Even of this rejected generation (11: 8-10) there is a remnant saved (11: 4-6), and this generation, which is now nearly ended (more than twenty-five years have passed since the crucifixion of Jesus), will soon give place to another which will be moved by sight of evangelistic success among the Gentiles to join the Christian movement. This will at once usher in the New Age (11: 11-15). Therefore Gentile Christians everywhere must lay aside their anti-semitic prejudice and humbly recognize the primacy of the Jew in the plan of God (11: 16-32, especially 18, 20, 25).

4. In 12: 1-15: 13 Paul discusses *the details of the ethical ideal which are to be wrought out in the conduct*

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*of the men of faith while they are waiting for the dawning of the New Age.*

In general they are to discard the habits of this present flesh age, and are to give the re-enforced "mind," or spiritual nature, free opportunity to live, here and now, the life of the Coming Age of spirit (12: 1-2).

After a vivid, morally challenging portrait of the man waiting for the New Age (12: 3-21), there follows a warning against lack of respect for civil authority (13: 1-7), a warning perhaps particularly pertinent in Rome, for if the Christians there just under the Emperor's eye should become objects of his suspicion, Christians all over the empire might suffer, evangelization be checked and the Lord's coming delayed.

Christians must be scrupulous about paying their debts and must not count on the speedy break-up of the present age as a time of escape from such obligations (13: 8-10; cf. I Thess. 4: 11-12).

A difference of opinion has arisen in Rome, and is likely to arise elsewhere, between vegetarians and meat eaters, a difference of opinion which threatens the harmony that must characterize those who are waiting for their Lord (14: 1-15: 13).

## VI. THE RELATION OF ROMANS TO GALATIANS

The similarity of Romans to Galatians, a letter written a few years earlier, is at once apparent. This similarity is due to the fact that in both Paul has occasion to employ phraseology that had become somewhat stereotyped through long use in oral discussion. In one particular, however, there seems at first glance to be a decided difference of viewpoint in the two letters. Paul seems in Romans to speak much more appreciatively of the law of Moses than in Galatians. In Romans he calls the law "holy and righteous and good" (7:12, 16); "spiritual" (7:14), the "law of God" (7:22, 25; 8:7), something which he desires to "establish" (3:31), something to which his gospel secures an obedience otherwise impossible (8:3-4). In Galatians, on the other hand, he speaks of the law with depreciation as something which God allowed a group of angels to put into Moses' hand for delivery to the people through him as their mediator—a transaction utterly inferior to his own direct approach earlier to Abraham with the covenant of "faith" (3:17-20). He even goes so far as to call a return to the law on the part of Galatian Christians a return to the "weak and beggarly elements," probably referring to angelic beings whom they had worshiped as deities before they became Christians (4:9).

In connection with this apparent difference of viewpoint, certain fundamental points of agreement ought not to be overlooked. In both letters the essential requirement of the law is represented to be the divine activity, "love" (Gal. 5: 14-15; Rom. 13: 8-10). In both, the law appears not as a primitive institution but an after thought (Gal. 3: 17; Rom. 5: 20), meant to be transient (Gal. 3: 25; Rom. 7: 4; 10: 14), an institution belonging to the present flesh age, not destined to prevail in the New Age (Gal. 4: 8-11; Rom. in 4-6). In both, its function is to make sin appear in open transgression (Gal. 3: 19; Rom. 5: 20), and so to prepare the transgressor to appreciate Jesus Christ the Saviour (Gal. 3: 22-24; Rom. 7: 7-25). This last point is most clearly wrought out in Rom. 7: 7-25. The law with the life of love as its high spiritual ideal was put down into the flesh age where "Sin" and "Death" reign. It was not able to cope with these terribly malignant lords of the flesh age. Sin instantly seized upon it and shrewdly used it as a device for getting flesh men to commit sin, that is, disobey the law, incur its penalty and so come under the power of Death. This conduct revealed the true devilishness of Sin. Sin had its mask stripped off and was "shown to be Sin by working death to me through that which is good—that through the commandment Sin might become exceeding sinful" (Rom. 7: 13). God overruled this maltreatment of his law by Sin, in such a way as to make Sin really accomplish the divine purpose. Law, so misused, made sinful men appreciate Jesus Christ, the deliverer of men from bondage to

Sin and Death. He came down into Sin's flesh world, a sinless being, overcame Sin by a death and resurrection that demonstrated his superiority and so enabled him to bring Sin's flesh age to a termination in the judgment day (Rom. 8: 3). Of course, under such circumstances, according to both Romans and Galatians, any one would be a fool to rely for acquittal in the judgment day on a law which had not been able to stand up and enforce itself against Sin and Death. Gentile Christians who should do this would be simply falling back into their old bondage to "the Elements," their old pagan deities (Gal. 4: 9). All Jews, too, who should rely on this impotent law for righteousness would be in this same sad bondage to the lords of the present flesh age in which we all live (cf. note on 3: 21).

In this view of the case it is not necessary to identify the "angels" of Gal. 3: 19, through whom the law came with the "weak and beggarly" deity "elements" of Gal. 4: 9, who preside over the present age, although one is sometimes tempted to do so. Still less is it necessary to suppose that in Gal. 4: 8-11 Paul recognizes behind the written law a personal being, "Law," which he classifies among the deity "Elements."

The peculiar warmth of feeling with which in Galatians he says what he has to say against the law, is due to the fact that Galatians was written in the heat of bitter controversy, when Paul was endeavoring with all his power to prevent the fatal lapse of his Galatian converts from faith-righteousness into rabbinic devotion to the Mosaic law. On the other hand, the pecu-



liar glow of devotion with which in Romans he says what he always has so say in favor of the law, may be due to the fact that in the interval between the writing of Galatians and Romans had occurred the scandalous licentiousness of some of his Gentile converts in the Corinthian church together with what was worse, the general indifference of a great Gentile church to such conduct (I Cor. 5: 2, 9-13). This may have somewhat frightened him and made him feel that he must maintain among all Gentile Christians respect for the ethical requirements of the law. Such respect would be especially urged in a document intended to provide a unification platform for Jewish and Gentile Christianity.

## VII. ROMANS AND MODERN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

As has been said, Romans reports a great religious experience interpreted necessarily in the terms of the pre-suppositions current in Paul's world of thought. Some of these pre-suppositions have disappeared from modern thought. We do not think of a series of heavens above us; we do not take for granted the malign influence of angels and demons in the lower heavens, the two ages, the sin of Adam, the impending end of the world. What is there in the religious experience reported in Romans that can be reproduced in our day and interpreted in the terms of our own thought? Is the letter anything more than a contribution to the history of past religious experience? If we can set our minds at rest on this point we shall be able to proceed to the exegetical study of the letter from the historical standpoint with greater freedom and comfort.

The letter is of great and lasting value, for its fundamental ideas present an insistent challenge to men in all ages. There are certain features of the religious experience reported here that have repeatedly proved themselves to be capable of reproduction and central in the truly religious life. Some of them may be barely mentioned here.

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1. *Peace with God through faith in Christ was the fundamental feature of Paul's and all other early Christian experience.* Having faith in Christ means for us, as it did for Paul, adopting the ideals of Jesus and reaching out to his immortal spirit for help in realizing them. His ideals seem to us essentially as they did to Paul, a daily life of prayerful obedient love to God, the Heavenly Father; a daily life of loving relationship to our fellowmen; the daily practice of immortality. When we commit ourselves irrevocably to these ideals and let our affections follow the immortal spirit of Jesus out into the unseen world for help in realizing them, we too, like Paul, find ourselves experiencing a growing awareness of an unseen world of which we triumphantly feel ourselves to be an indestructible part. We find within us a deepening peace with God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. We find the sense of forgiveness, redemption from bondage to the evil will, whatever be our theory regarding the source of the evil will and the psychological nature of our contact with the unseen world of responsive spiritual reality.

2. *The vast scope of God's plans in space and time* fired Paul's imagination and kindled his religious feeling. Paul is often misrepresented as predominantly a teacher of purely individualistic religion. The individual through faith in Christ does find forgiveness and peace of mind. But Paul saw much more than this in his daily thought of God and the world. In the foreground of his thought were vast heavens, great cosmic personalities moving through them, ages

ending and beginning, the cataclysmic overthrow of vast unseen powers.

We may not at all follow him here in the details of his outlook but we are indebted to him for scope of vision. We, too, reach out into a vast universe and find great power operating there, although we conceive it to be working in evolutionary ways. And, like Paul, our religious experience is shaped by thinking of the love of God as the controlling triumphant source of cosmic movements, a loving personal power at the heart of a universe in process of evolution, guaranteeing to men an eternal career not simply as individuals but as a race.

3. *The death suffering of Christ is an expression of the love of God triumphantly operating to overcome evil.* Here we do not necessarily follow Paul in his varied effort to think this idea in the terms of Jewish sacrifice, the defeat of deified angels, astral "Elements" or personal beings "Sin" and "Death." But human experience generation after generation finds a powerful redeeming moral incentive and satisfaction in realizing that the evil human will causes suffering to the heart of the Heavenly Father, and that the burden of sharing and revealing this suffering was necessarily borne by Jesus Christ as he entered intimately into the experience of the unseen Father. From such "love of God in Christ Jesus" we too feel that no malign power can ever separate us (8: 38-39).

4. *Paul's estimate of the personality of Jesus* assigned to it the supreme place next to God. Paul worked this idea out not only in terms of moral supremacy but

also of physical creation—though this latter idea is not explicitly stated in Romans. Jesus Christ acted for God in the making of all worlds and angels as well as in their moral redemption. Our minds rest content at present with the practical experience of the moral and religious supremacy of Jesus, a living Redeemer from moral evil. The bearing of this moral leadership on the physical development of the universe we do not see so clearly as Paul did. We do see that redeemed men find the sphere of their activity in the discovery and mastery of physical force, in employing so-called physical forces for great moral ends. The relation of Jesus Christ, the religious leader of the race, to this physical development, past, present, and future, is for us, as it was for Paul, a matter of speculation.

5. *The fundamental ethical teaching of Paul* was that "love" is to be supreme in human conduct. The detailed ways in which the loving disposition should express itself were determined in Paul's case by his belief that the end of the age was near at hand. The detailed ethical teachings that appear in Romans are not such as to be much influenced by this belief. For us, too, love, unflinching devotion to the common good, is the fundamental ethical principle. We find ourselves charged with the responsibility of discovering the proper application of this principle to the changing conditions of developing life. The acceptance of this responsibility is a character-making process for us as it was for Paul.

## VIII. THE INTEGRITY OF THE LETTER

### I. ARE CHS. 15-16 AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE LETTER?

This question is occasioned by the fact that there seem to have been very early copies of Romans in which the material now found in these chapters was wanting. There is, to be sure, no extant manuscript in any language in which this material is lacking but there is some evidence that at least as early as the middle of the second century there were in existence copies of Romans that ended at 14:23, either with or without the doxology which is now found at 16:25-27. The evidence may be briefly summarized as follows:

(i) The Greek manuscripts of Romans present strange phenomena in their treatment of the doxology. (a) In those that are regarded as most authoritative by scholars who follow the Westcott-Hort valuation, Aleph BCDE, the doxology appears where we have it, 16:25-27, and nowhere else. (b) In many manuscripts, including one of the 9th century, L, it appears between 14:23 and 15:1, and there only. (c) In a few manuscripts, including one of the 5th century, A, it appears in both places. (d) In two closely related Greek-Latin manuscripts of the 9th century, FG, it is omitted entirely in the Greek text, although G leaves a space sufficient for it after 14:23, and F at the end of ch. 16 where it appears in the Latin column.

The presence of the doxology between 14:23 and 15:1 is indirect evidence of a short edition omitting chs. 15-16, for it seems hard to explain the presence of a long formal doxology there, where the logical connection is so close, except on the supposition that there were at one time copies that ended with 14:23.

The testimony of Origen regarding the Greek manuscripts of his day gives us information earlier than that directly afforded by any extant Greek manuscript. He says, according to the Latin translation of his comment on Rom. 16:25-27 (244-249 A. D.), that some manuscripts placed the doxology immediately after 14:23 while others, which he himself followed, placed it at the end of ch. 16. He speaks of both of these readings as being found in manuscripts which Marcion\* (c. 150 A. D.) had not "corrupted."

\* Marcion was a wealthy Christian shipmaster from Pontus who in Rome, a little before 150 A.D., undertook to reform the whole Christian Church, and became the leader of a large heretical sect of Christians. He considered the just, wrathful God of the Jews and the Old Testament to have been not the supreme, loving God of the Christians, but an inferior being who created the world and was ignorant of the true God. Marcion therefore entirely discarded the Jewish scriptures with their misleading exaltation of this Jews' God. He also undertook to purify the Christian scriptures from what he considered to be the interpolations introduced into them by Christians who were infected with a devotion to the Old Testament and the Jews' God. He issued an edition of Luke's Gospel and Paul's epistles from which he removed as far as possible everything that was inconsistent with his point of view and that therefore he felt to be not genuine and truly Christian. Ch. 15 of Romans contains certain appreciative references to the Jewish scriptures (vs. 3-4, 8-12, 21) and to the Jewish

Possibly these manuscripts of Origen's day with the doxology between 14:23 and 15:1 were really indirectly due to Marcion although they seemed to Origen to have an orthodox ancestry. A copy that had restored all of the Marcionite omissions (e.g., a long passage after 8:11, Tertullian *Against Marcion*, 5:14) except chs. 15-16 might, because of such restorations, not have seemed to the orthodox to be Marcionite, and might have been circulated among them. To such a short copy the Pauline doxology which stood in other longer copies at 16:25-27 might have been added. Then later to such a short copy, ending with the doxology, chs. 15-16 minus 16:25-27 might naturally have been added. In this way there would have been in Origen's day some copies in which the doxology stood at 16:25-27 and others in which it stood between 14:23 and 15:1. Both copies would have been considered to have an orthodox ancestry, although the presence of the doxology between 14:23 and 15:1 would really have been indirectly due to Marcion.

(2) In the Latin versions that preceded the Vulgate (384-386 A. D.)—which agrees with our present text—Professor Lake (*The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, pp. 342-3) finds three types of reading: the doxology people (vs. 26-27) which would have seemed to him offensive and un-Pauline. The first of these offensive passages, vs. 3-4, is so closely connected with vs. 1-2, that Marcion's excision would naturally have begun with 15:1 and might have included the whole of chs. 15-16 since they do not contain, in addition to the offensive passages, much that is not purely personal.



at the end of ch. 16; between 14:23 and 15:1; and omitted entirely.

Another evidence of the early existence of the short form appears in the analysis of the contents of the letter that is found in codex Amiatinus (8th century) of the Vulgate and in other places. This analysis divides the letter into 51 paragraphs and briefly summarizes the contents of each. Paragraph 50 begins with 14:15 (since paragraph 49 contains 14:14 only). Its title is "Concerning the danger of grieving his brother by his food, and that the Kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." This caption must include at least 14:15-20 and probably 14:15-23. Paragraph 51 is pretty clearly the doxology, 16:25-27: "Concerning the mystery of the Lord kept in silence before his passion but revealed after his passion." That is, the doxology followed immediately after 14:23 and closed the letter, omitting chs. 15-16. The text assumed in these paragraph headings is thought to be older than the Vulgate (Corssen, *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1909, pp. 27-28; Lake, *op. cit.* p. 337), so that this carries the short edition back into the pre-Vulgate period of the Latin text.

(3) When we turn to the Church Fathers to see, if possible, what copy of Romans they were using, interesting phenomena appear.

(1) It is thought that no clear quotation from ch. 15-16 is found in Irenæus (Gaul, c. 180 A. D.), Tertullian (N. Africa, c. 200-220 A. D.), Cyprian (N. Africa, c. 250 A. D.). This perhaps is not strange for

the chapters do not contain much that is quotable. Still Tertullian does not quote from ch. 15 the passages that emphasize the value of the Jewish scriptures and the spiritual primacy of the Jews (15:4, 8-12, 21, 27), passages that would have been pertinent in his opposition to Marcion. This may be due to the fact that in answering Marcion he purposely (*Ag. Marcion*, 5:13) confined himself to the mutilated edition of Romans that Marcion is known to have used, and if so it would show that at least these verses, and perhaps all of ch. 15, were not in Marcion's Romans.

Furthermore Tertullian (*Ag. Marcion*, 5:14) in quoting Rom. 14:10 says that it is in the concluding section ("in clausula") of the letter. This "concluding section" may possibly have included chs. 15-16 but the term seems more naturally applicable to a short edition ending with 14:23. More explicit is the statement made by Origen a century later than Marcion. In his Greek commentary on Romans (244-249 A. D.), of which we have a Latin translation made by Rufinus, Origen, commenting on 16:25-27, says that Marcion not only entirely removed this doxology from the letter but "cut off" or "separated off" (*dissecuit*, variant reading *desecuit*) everything from the place where it is written "all that is not of faith is sin" (i.e., Rom. 14:23) to the end. That is, Marcion's mutilated copy of Romans ended at 14:23 without any doxology. Zahn (*Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 397) and some other scholars before him have maintained that *dissecuit* means "cut in pieces" rather than "cut off" and so have argued that portions of

chs. 15-16 were retained in Marcion's Romans, but this is not the common opinion. (Cf. Sanday-Headlam, *Romans*, p. xc; Lake, *op. cit.* p. 340; Corssen, *op. cit.* pp. 13-14.)

Was Romans ever a general circular letter? The occasion of this question is not simply the fact just brought out that the last two chapters with their large amount of personal matter seem to have been lacking in some early copies, but also the fact that there seem to have been early copies in which the words "in Rome" 1:7, 15 were lacking. The words are omitted in G, the 9th century manuscript in Dresden. Also in a manuscript found at Mt. Athos in 1897, giving the Greek text of Romans which Origen used in making his commentary, the scribe admits in a marginal note that he has himself supplied the words "in Rome," which he found lacking both in Origen's text and comment. There were then in Origen's day copies without these words. It is tempting to suppose that the copies that omitted these words also omitted the last two chapters (cf. Lake, *op. cit.* pp. 346-8), and that therefore both at the beginning and end we have evidence of a circular letter, like the letter to the Ephesians in which there is good authority for omitting the words "in Ephesus" (1:1).

Lightfoot held that Paul originally wrote to the Romans the letter as we have it minus the doxology 16:25-27. At a later time he wished to use it as a circular letter and so shortened it by omitting chs. 15-16 with their purely personal references to the Roman situation. To this abbreviated letter, i.e.,

after 14:23, he added the doxology now found at 16:25-27 and omitted the words "in Rome" 1:7, 15. A serious objection to this theory is the improbability that Paul would have stopped at 14:23 instead of at 15:13 where the personal matter really begins.

Renan in his *Life of Paul* advanced an hypothesis somewhat akin to that of a circular letter. He thought that Paul himself issued the letter in four forms for four different sets of readers (since the letter seems now to have four possible endings: 15:33, 16:20, 16:24, 16:27): chs. 1-11, 15 for the Romans; chs. 1-14, 16:1-20 for the Ephesians (see discussion of ch. 16 p. 71); chs. 1-14, 16:21-24 for the Thessalonians (since there are Macedonian names in 16:21, cf. Acts 17:6, 20:4); and chs. 1-14, 16:25-27 for some unknown destination. In each of the last three cases he supposes some necessary modification in the first half of the first chapter. Renan's theory seems artificial in the working out of its details. Yet if the general situation at the time of writing was at all that outlined by the present writer on pp. 36-43, it seems very probable that several copies of large portions of this letter would at once in a wholly informal manner have found their way to various localities. Tertius, the keenly interested scribe (16:22), would have made a copy for himself, just as a typist today is often allowed by his employer to keep a copy of an address that keenly interests him. Paul's well-to-do host (16:23) and other members of the church in Corinth where Paul was writing would have wished to keep a copy of Paul's discussion of the great question, some phases

of which had so profoundly stirred them all in recent months. Representatives of some of the churches, members of the committee that was to go with Paul to Jerusalem carrying the conciliatory gift (Rom. 15: 25-26, I Cor. 16: 3-4), had gathered at Corinth expecting that to be their starting point (Acts 20: 3-4). Or if they joined his party later they heard others constantly talking about the letter Paul had just written. Paul himself would have a copy of the letter with him. They all knew that Paul's purpose in having the gift taken to Jerusalem was the same that moved him to write the letter to the Romans, namely the unification of the church. They all sympathized profoundly with this purpose, otherwise they would not have been on the committee, and each one would have wished to secure a copy of the unification letter for his own church. In this way informal copies of the letter, omitting various portions of the matter particularly intended for Rome, would have come into existence. Some of them might have omitted the words "in Rome" (1:7, 15) and there may well have been a degree of instability regarding the text of the last two chapters. This would not sufficiently account for the definite phenomenon of a fourteen chapter copy closing with the doxology. On the whole this still seems best accounted for by the theory (already stated) that Marcion stopped there because the matter in the context immediately following was not congenial to him, and ch. 16 added nothing of doctrinal value (cf. Sunday-Headlam, *op. cit.* p. xcvi).

It has been assumed in all this discussion that chs. 15-16 contain nothing that Paul might not have written. The objections once urged against their Paulinity by Baur have fallen away. Professor William Ryder's interesting theory that Tertius (16:22) was their author has not gained general assent.

### 2. IS CH. 16 AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE LETTER?

This question has arisen apart from the question regarding chs. 15-16 discussed in the last paragraph.

The chief reasons for refusing to regard it as an integral part of Romans have been the following:

(1) Since Paul had not yet visited Rome when he wrote Romans, he would not be likely to have so many personal acquaintances there as appear in this chapter.

(2) Especially Prisca, Aquila and Epænetus (3-5) are not likely to have been in Rome at this time.

(3) Paul would not have had such acquaintance with the details of the situation in Rome as appears in this chapter (vs. 10, 11, 14, 15).

(4) He would not write to a church that he had not founded with such authority as is thought to appear in v. 19, and does not do so in the body of the letter.

(5) There is no evidence in the body of the letter of such serious immorality as is thought to be charged against some of the members in vs. 17-18.

In view of these difficulties two ingenious but rather arbitrary theories have been advanced, both of which agree in supposing that we have in our Romans two genuine letters of Paul to the Roman Christians. One

of these theories\* distinguishes an earlier longer letter consisting of what is now found in 1-11, 15:8-33, 16:21-27, and a shorter letter consisting of 12:1-15:7, 16:1-20 together with an introduction that has disappeared. The latter was written after Paul's release from the two years of Roman imprisonment mentioned in Acts, and therefore at a time when he would have had many friends in Rome, would have known the Roman situation thoroughly and would have been able to speak with the authority which personal acquaintance would warrant.

The other theory† supposes 16:3-15 to be a note written to the Christians in Rome by Paul from Puteoli where he left the ship on his journey as a prisoner to Rome (Acts 28:13). The letter that he had written to the Roman Christians three years earlier (our Romans minus 16:3-15) had made him many friends. Moreover it is assumed that his friends in the East had journeyed to Rome before him when they heard that he had appealed to the Emperor (Acts 25:9-12) and were now waiting for him there. In this note, mentioning many of them by name, Paul announces his arrival. The "Brothers" in Puteoli (Acts 28:14) gave him the information about the house churches and other details of the situation in Rome that appears in this chapter.

A far more common theory is that which regards ch. 16, or certain portions of it, as a note, or part of

\* Spitta, *Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Urchristentums*; Cf. Gifford, *Bible Commentary*, p. 29.

† Erbes, in *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1909.



note, written to the Christians in Ephesus. The main reasons for regarding Ephesus as the destination are these: Prisca and Aquila (v. 5) had been in Ephesus only a short time before Romans was written and had a church in their house there (I Cor. 16:19); Epænetus "the first fruits of Asia" (v. 5) would naturally be found in Ephesus, where Paul's work in Asia began and centered (Acts 19:1, 10); Paul's long residence in Ephesus would have given him many intimate friends there, would have made him acquainted with all the details of the situation, and would have warranted the tone of authority that is supposed to be found in v. 19.

The arguments in favor of Ephesus sometimes seem to have great force, but on the whole the balance of evidence seems to warrant the conclusion that the chapter is an integral part of the letter to the Romans.

(1) It is hard to see how the chapter would ever have been put with the letter to Rome if it had been really Ephesian. Professor Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East*, p. 228), who holds strongly to the Ephesian theory, thinks that the two letters were written at the same time by the scribe Tertius (16:22), and because they stood together in the copybook that he kept they came easily to be regarded as one letter. This assumes that the scribe's copybook would have been used as a source of information in making collections of the Pauline Epistles. Since Tertius was a Christian and perhaps himself interested in making such a collection this may not be impossible but it seems hardly probable. It might be maintained with



greater probability that a copy of Romans (see p. 68) was at once sent to Ephesus with ch. 16 attached, ch. 16 being intended for Ephesus only.

(2) If ch. 16 had been written to Ephesus it seems strange that there should have been no protest later by the Ephesian church against the appropriation of all their heroes by Rome—and that the Roman Christians should have been willing to adopt them to the exclusion of all mention of their own traditional heroes (Erbes).

(3) It does not seem at all improbable that there should be in the capital of the empire, to which all roads led, a number of persons whom Paul in his extensive travels during a quarter of a century had met elsewhere. The number of those mentioned in ch. 16 whom he knew personally, and not by reputation merely, is not so great as it may at first seem. If we consider the expression “beloved” and “fellow-prisoners” to indicate personal acquaintance, and “kinsman” to mean not personal acquaintance but “fellow Jew” (cf. 9:3), then there were only eight individuals or families whom Paul knew personally: Prisca and Aquila, Epænetus, Andronicus, Junias, Ampliatus, Stachys, Persis, Rufus and his mother.

(4) That Prisca and Aquila should have been back again in Rome within a year or two, or even within a few months after their residence in Ephesus (I Cor. 16:19), is not strange. We know from other sources than Romans that they lived at different times in Rome, Corinth and Ephesus (Acts 18:1-3, I Cor. 16:19, II Tim. 4:19, 1:15-16) and that they were

forced out of Rome (Acts 18:2) under circumstances that would make it natural for them to return as soon as they safely could. Since they were sufficiently well-to-do to afford a regular place of meeting for a group of Christians in their house in Ephesus (I Cor. 16:19), they presumably did so wherever they lived (Rom. 16:4).

(5) Paul's acquaintance by reputation with a considerable number of persons and with the details of the situation in Rome (vs. 10, 11, 14, 15), together with the emphasis on such acquaintance, is exactly what we should expect in a letter to the Romans. It would be quite natural for Paul, as the consciously responsible head of Gentile evangelization in the world (Rom. 15:15-20, Gal. 2:7-9), to keep thoroughly posted regarding all the details of work and workers in every center of Gentile evangelization,—particularly in one that he had never visited ("How greatly I strive for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh", Col. 2:1). Any efficient modern missionary bishop or superintendent would surely have such an acquaintance with an important unvisited station in his field. Paul would know the names of all the leading Christians, their difficulties and opportunities (cf. II Cor. 11:28-29). This would be particularly true in the case of the strategic church in the capital of the empire, which he had, doubtless by a detailed study of its situation, repeatedly prepared to visit during the last few years (1:13, 15:22), which he was now hoping to enlist in the hearty support of his projected Spanish mission, but which was in danger

of being prejudiced against him by the enemies who had recently so nearly wrested from him the great church in Corinth, the city where he was writing. Surely under such circumstances he would have thoroughly visualized the Roman situation, and would utilize for emphasis every possible point of personal contact.

(6) A natural interpretation of v. 19 finds in it no inconsistent assumption of authority. See notes.

(7) The immorality reprobated in vs. 17-18 has not already broken out in the church, but is a tendency that has appeared elsewhere and may appear in Rome. This is in harmony with the viewpoint of the body of the letter.

(8) Paul's emphasis of his Jewish nationality (vs. 7, 11, 21) is in accord with that found in the body of the letter (9: 1-5).

(9) The fact that many of the names in the chapter appear in Roman inscriptions as members of Cæsar's household (cf. Phil. 4: 22) is interesting and has been emphasized by Lightfoot and Sanday-Headlam. The common occurrence of most of these names elsewhere however somewhat weakens this argument.

## IX. ANALYSIS OF THE EPISTLE

- I. GOD'S WAY OF DECLARING MEN RIGHTEOUS, AND SO FIT FOR THE NEW AGE, IS THROUGH THEIR BELIEF IN JESUS CHRIST WHO DIED FOR THEM, A WAY NEEDED BY ALL, JEW AS WELL AS GENTILE, AND OPEN TO ALL, GENTILE AS WELL AS JEW, WITHOUT SUBJECTION TO THE MOSAIC LAW. CHS. 1-5.
1. *Introduction*, 1: 1-17.
- (1) Address, 1: 1-7.
  - (2) Introductory explanation of Paul's years of strange delay in visiting Rome and announcement that he will soon come, 1: 8-15.
  - (3) Introductory statement of the general theme: The good tidings of righteousness and salvation through faith possible for all men by the power of God, 1: 16-17.
2. *The entire human race is unrighteous*, 1: 18-3: 20.
- (1) The Gentile world is unrighteous, 1: 18-32.
  - (2) The Jewish world is unrighteous, 2: 1-3: 20.
    - (a) The Jew no better than the Gentile whom he is so quick to condemn, 2: 1-11.
    - (b) Possession of the Jewish law no guarantee of righteousness, 2: 12-16.
    - (c) Jewish unrighteousness especially flagrant, 2: 17-24.
    - (d) Righteousness a state of heart and not a matter of nationality, 2: 25-29.
    - (e) An advantage to be a Jew rather than a Gentile but the advantage not such as to give superior righteousness and immunity from God's wrath, 3: 1-9.
    - (f) The Jewish law itself proves the Jews' unrighteousness, 3: 10-20.
3. *Righteousness by faith available for guilty humanity*, 3: 21-31.

4. *Abraham and David witnesses for righteousness by faith*, ch. 4.
  - (1) Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, had only righteousness by faith. Are the men of the synagogue better than Abraham! 4: 1-5.
  - (2) David also a witness for righteousness by faith, 4: 6-8.
  - (3) The Jew has no monopoly of faith-righteousness, 4: 9-12.
  - (4) The law-keeping Jew may no longer continue to anticipate having a monopoly of the earth, 4: 13-22.
  - (5) The significance of the record of Abraham's faith, 4: 23-25.
5. *The New Race in the New Age*, ch. 5.
  - (1) The love of God in Jesus Christ the sure ground of enthusiasm for the Coming Age, 5: 1-11.
  - (2) The old race of Adam and the new race of Jesus Christ, 5: 12-21.

## II. FAITH-RIGHTEOUS MEN AND SIN. Chs. 6-8.

1. *The faith-righteous man cannot continue in sin so as to enjoy more of God's forgiving love*, 6: 1-14.
2. *Faith-righteousness necessarily involves enslavement to God's righteousness*, 6: 15-7: 6.
3. *The law does not create sin; it reveals sin*, 7: 7-12. }
4. *Not the law but sin causes death*, 7: 13-25. }
5. *The secret of the faith-righteous man's victory and hope*, 8: 1-30.
  - (1) The spiritual nature of the faith-righteous man so reinforced by the Spirit of God as to be able to meet the ethical demands of the law and be sure of life even for the body as well as the spirit, 8: 1-14.
  - (2) And therefore sure, as sons of God, to inherit with Christ a glorious career in the New Age, when all nature shall be glorified by emancipation from decay and death, 8: 15-30.
6. *Hymn of Triumph*. Our glorification in the New Age certain, assured to us by the invincible love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, 8: 31-39.

### III. THE RELATION OF THE JEWISH NATION TO JESUS' MESSIANIC SALVATION. CHS. 9-11.

#### 1. *The present unbelief of the Jews no evidence that God does not plan ultimately to save the nation, 9: 1-29.*

- (1) Gentile Christians must not think that Paul has given up all hope of seeing his fellow countrymen accept messianic salvation and is indifferent to their condition, 9: 1-5.
- (2) Gentile Christians must not argue that God has not purposed to give the Jews messianic salvation on the ground that, if such a purpose were ascribed to him, present Jewish opposition would necessitate concluding that his purpose had come to naught. God has simply passed by the present generation of Jews in accordance with his ancient plan to introduce messianic salvation by a process of selection, 9: 6-13.
- (3) Gentile Christians may say that to attribute such arbitrary discriminations to God is to charge him with unrighteousness, that if he had been planning to give messianic salvation to the Jewish nation he certainly would not have been so unfair as to pass over this generation. Such discriminations are not unrighteous, because the scriptures clearly attribute them to God (15-18), and no man has any right to question the conduct of God (19-26), 9: 14-26.
- (4) God's policy of selecting some and passing others by among the Jews appears not only in the case of the patriarchal families but later in Isaiah's time as well, 9: 27-29.

#### 2. *The present plight of the Jews is due to their obstinate and inexcusable refusal of faith-righteousness, 9: 30-10: 21.*

- (1) Although the Jews have always seemed to be specialists in righteousness, they have been outstripped in the sphere of their specialty by Gentiles. This is because they failed to seek the faith-righteousness that God reveals through Christ, 9: 30-10: 5.

- (2) Faith-righteousness is in its nature so clear, simple, and close at hand that the Jews are without excuse for having failed to understand and adopt it, 10: 6-13.
  - (3) The Jews cannot excuse themselves by saying that the message about faith failed to reach them, for it has been widely published, vs. 14-18.
  - (4) The Jews cannot say in excuse that they were not adequately warned of their danger. Both Moses and Isaiah warned them, 10: 19-21.
3. *Gentile Christians must never make the proud assumption that God has cast off his ancient people and transferred his favor to themselves. The Jewish nation will soon join the Gentiles in accepting messianic salvation, 11: 1-32.*
- (1) Gentile Christians must not say that God has discarded His people. Paul himself and Jewish Christians scattered here and there over the empire are proof to the contrary, to say nothing of the impossibility that God's ancient choice of the nation should ever be revoked, 11: 1-6.
  - (2) What has happened is that a few Jews, in accordance with God's policy of selection, have obtained messianic salvation but the rest of the nation have been hardened as both Isaiah and David represented, 11: 7-10.
  - (3) God's purpose in producing the apostacy of this perverse generation was to bring the message of messianic salvation effectively to the Gentiles, and in such a way as later to provoke in the Jews a real appreciation of it. When the Jews in their turn also accept it, the world will experience no less a blessing than the resurrection from the dead and the dawn of the New Age, 11: 11-16.
  - (4) Gentile Christians must lay aside their anti-Jewish race pride and recognize the fact that the Jews, who have been the objects of God's special care, are more evidently eligible to messianic salvation than are Gentiles, and will soon be gathered with Gentiles into the experience of God's messianic mercies, 11: 17-32.
4. *Everlasting Glory be to the all-wise God! 11: 33-36.*

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### IV. DIRECTIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF THOSE WHO IN THE LIFE OF FAITH WAIT FOR THE NEW AGE. CHS. 12-15.

1. *General statement:* Though the present evil age has not yet ended you must no longer live its life. Through the spiritual re-enforcement that your higher nature has experienced you must even now live the life of the Coming Age of Spirit, and make preliminary demonstration of the will of God, 12: 1-2.
2. Especially do *leaders and "gifted" persons*, as they wait for the New Age, need to cultivate the spirit of sober-minded humility, 12: 3-8.
3. *Love* in its various manifestations must characterize the life of all the brothers, 12: 9-21.
4. *The brotherhood must obey the government officials*, 13: 1-7.
5. *The brotherhood must not look to the speedy coming of the New Age as a means of evading the payment of private debts*, 13: 8-14.
6. *Brothers who conscientiously abstain* from all use of meat and wine, although unjustified in their asceticism, are to be received into the brotherhood and treated with consideration, —a consideration that they in turn must show toward those who do not share their ascetic viewpoint, 14: 1-23.
7. *In general*, the strong must always receive and help the weak, as Christ did when he bore our reproaches and especially when, as a strong Jewish Christ, he brought help also to Gentiles, 15: 1-13.
8. The fact that the readers are Gentile Christians *justifies a letter* from one who has been greatly blessed by God as pioneer apostle to Gentiles in all parts of the world, and who now wishes to enlist their interest in the conciliatory Gentile gift which he is bearing to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, and also in plans for a Spanish mission which he will soon lay before them in person, 15: 14-33.

### V. PERSONAL MESSAGES. CH. 16.

1. *Phæbe of Cenchreae*, bearer of the letter introduced and commended, 16: 1-2.
2. *Greetings* to many known personally or by reputation to Paul, 16: 3-16.



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3. *Warning* against the type of licentious Christianity that is appearing here and there in the churches, 16: 17-20.
4. *Greetings* from a group of brothers closely associated with Paul and interested in the dictation of his letter, 16: 21-23.

VI. CONCLUDING DOXOLOGY, 16: 25-27.

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# THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE ROMANS

## I. GOD'S WAY OF DECLARING MEN RIGHTEOUS AND SO FIT FOR THE NEW AGE IS THROUGH THEIR BELIEF IN JESUS CHRIST WHO DIED FOR THEM, A WAY NEEDED BY ALL, JEW AS WELL AS GENTILE, AND OPEN TO ALL, GENTILE AS WELL AS JEW, WITHOUT SUBJECTION TO THE MOSAIC LAW, 1-5

### I. *Introduction, 1: 1-17.*

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(1) *Address: Paul, Jesus Christ's Bondservant and High Commissioner for the Proclamation of the Gospel throughout the Gentile World, to the followers of Jesus Christ in Rome, 1: 1-7.*

"It is Paul who writes, Paul, bondservant to Jesus Christ, summoned by him to be his messenger, separated from all other work to spread the Good News that God has sent to the men of our generation (1). God began to prepare men to receive his Good News long ago, when the prophets set down in writings that are evermore sacred the message they received from him about his Son (2). His Son we have finally seen, a man of flesh, taking his place in this sinful world of flesh as a member of David's royal family (3), and yet also a spirit, holy in spite of his connection with flesh, designated as God's Son by passing into fulness of power through his resurrection into the world of spirit—*Jesus Christ Our Lord* (4). It was none other than he himself from whom I received the gracious honour of appointment as apostolic herald of God's Good News to all in the empire whom we Jews call Gentiles, summoning them to yield him the obedient service that springs from faith in him and that will bring honor to his name (5). You also are included in this number, summoned of God to be Jesus Christ's willing bondservants (6), and so I may write to all of you in Rome that are God's beloved, sum-

1. Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,
2. which he promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,

moned by him to be his holy men set sacredly apart for his use in the world. May God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord make you to know and share their loving kindness and perfect peace (5)."

This is an unusually full, formal and almost solemn address. (Cf. I Cor. 1: 1-3, II Cor. 1: 1-2.) The author is settling down to an unusually complete and significant statement of certain phases of "his gospel" (2: 16). The fact also that he has never visited the church to which he writes (1: 13) makes it appropriate that he should address them with some formal courtesy. In the sentences that follow (1: 8-15) this formality is at once transfused with the light of Paul's genial spirit.

**1. Servant of Jesus Christ.** "Bondservant, or slave, of Jesus Christ" seems to have been a somewhat common designation of all Christians (I Cor. 7: 22, Eph. 6: 6,) as well as of Christian leaders (James 1: 1, Jude 1, II Pet. 1: 1, Col. 4: 12). In the Old Testament also the title "Jehovah's bond-servant" is applied to any worshipper (e.g., Ps. 34: 22) as well as to a great leader like David (Ps. 89: 3) or to the prophets (Amos 3: 7, Zech. 1: 6). To some Greco-Roman ears the title would have suggested the familiar phrase "slave of the Emperor" and perhaps the case of the slave who found freedom by becoming the slave of a god. (Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, 381, 326.)

It expresses Paul's glad recognition of the fact that he is owned by Jesus Christ, a living Lord who sends him on important business (I Cor. 1: 17) and plans his missionary itinerary for him (I Thess. 3: 11).

The word "Christ" in the expression "Christ Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" is no longer simply a title, "The Anointed," but a part of the proper name. Of course the meaning of the word as a title was not entirely lost in the use of it as a proper name.

**Apostle.** A messenger entrusted with important business; the highest form of service in the church (I Cor. 12: 28); not limited by Paul to the Twelve and himself (Rom. 16: 7, cf. II Cor. 8: 23, Phil. 2: 25).

**The Gospel of God.** What Paul meant in detail by the "gospel of God" will become evident in the body of the letter. Briefly stated in the modes of Paul's own thought it meant the announcement that those who had "faith" in Jesus Christ, that is,



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3. concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,
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who gave themselves up as "bondservants" to him their living "Lord," would at once begin a life of spiritual companionship with him, which would free them from evil habits in this present age of flesh dominated by evil powers, and guarantee them a verdict of acquittal from all their sins and a victorious entrance into the glorious world of spirit when Jesus Christ's judgment day should end this age of flesh.

**3. His son.** The central feature of Paul's "gospel" is God's Son. "Son of God" is one of the titles by which "the Christ," or in Hebrew terminology, "the Messiah," is designated in the synoptic Gospels (Matt. 16: 16, but cf. Mark 8: 29, Matt. 26: 63, cf. Mark 14: 61). The fact that it appears in the synoptic Gospels as an apparently well established messianic title indicates that it had been current among the Jews in the pre-Christian period. It appears (in the form of its equivalent "My Son"), in Enoch 105: 2, IV Esdras 7: 28, 29; 13: 32, 37, 52; 14: 9. The Jewish people had been called God's Son (Ex. 4: 22, Hosea 11: 1, cf. IV Esdras 6: 58, Jubilees 2: 20) and so also had the king (II Sam. 7: 14) so that the Messiah, the great King, might naturally be so designated. As the title passed into Christian usage it was of course greatly enriched by the personality of Jesus. Paul uses it, not as a stereotyped messianic title, but to express the unique relation between God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Of the Seed of David.** Paul does not call Jesus the "Son of David," which had been a Jewish designation of the Messiah but was no longer suitable among Christians because Jesus had died without the military achievements looked for by those who thought of the Messiah as inheriting the military spirit and policy of the great warrior-king, David. The title would also have been offensive to Paul's Gentile constituency because it represented the Messiah to be a Jew, rather than the non-racial "Son of God." (Cf. II Cor. 5: 16.)

It was, however, very much to the point for Paul to recognize that Jesus' Davidic lineage fulfilled prophecies contained in "holy Scriptures" for it gave a religion prestige in the Greco-Roman world to have an ancient literature and prophetic "oracles."

**According to the flesh.** May mean simply "physical descent" (Sanday-Headlam), but since the holiness of his spirit is emphasized in the next clause, it seems probable that Paul already implies the descent of the Son of God into the world of "Sin's flesh," an idea to be emphasized later (cf. 8: 3).

4. who was declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; *even* Jesus Christ our Lord,
5. through whom we received grace and apostleship,

4. **With power.** Describes the Son's glorified existence after the resurrection as contrasted with his career in the flesh.

**Spirit of Holiness.** "Spirit" was an element of his personality over against "flesh," and was sinless in spite of its connection with "Sin's flesh" (cf. 8: 3).

**Jesus Christ, our Lord.** The Greek word, "Kyrios," translated "Lord," had a variety of meanings. It was used by gentlemen in addressing each other (Acts 16: 30 "*Sirs*, what shall I do to be saved?"). It was used of deified Emperors, as a title of oriental gods ("Lord Serapis"), and in the Greek Old Testament it was constantly applied to Jehovah. As the title of Jehovah it was the "name above every name" granted to Jesus after his career of obedient humiliation on the earth (Phil. 2: 10-11, cf. Is. 45: 23). To those who were familiar with the religious use of the title, among both Jews and Greeks, the way in which the Christians applied it to Jesus would clearly have indicated that they worshipped him. There were "lords many" in the religious life of the day, but for the early Christians there was but "one Lord," (I Cor. 8: 5-6), "*our* Lord" Jesus Christ. In Paul's usage to call Jesus "Lord" was to declare one's self a Christian. When Paul stated his "word of faith" in its simplest terms (Rom. 10: 8-9) he said that one who confessed with his mouth "Lord Jesus," that is, applied to Jesus the title "Lord," and really believed in his heart that God had raised him from the dead, that is, had given him the "Lord's" place of power in the spirit world, should be saved. The same idea appears in I Cor. 12: 3 where the expression "*Anathema Jesus*" is a denial, and "*Lord Jesus*" a confession, of Christianity.

5. **We received.** "We" is almost the editorial we, but with some suggestion of others who had been appointed apostles. The others had not, however, been appointed apostles to the Gentiles as Paul had been. The R. V. marginal translation "Gentiles" is better than "nations." There would be no particular point in assuring the Romans (v. 6) that they were among the "nations," that they were a part of the world's population. Paul is here justifying himself for writing to the Roman Christians. It was for Gentiles that he felt a God-given responsibility (cf. Rom. 15: 16 in its context, 15: 8-21) and the Gentile Christians in Rome are in his parish although he has never visited them.

**Grace and apostleship.** A gracious appointment to apostle-

unto obedience of faith among all the nations, for his name's sake;

6. among whom are ye also, called *to be* Jesus Christ's:
7. to all that are in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

ship. The word translated grace suggests the double idea of beauty and gladness. In Paul's usage it means a beautiful kindness that makes its recipient glad, and so often an undeserved and unexpected kindness. Jesus' appointment of Paul to the high office of apostleship at a time when, near Damascus, Paul thought the judgment day had come and he was about to be swept away by the wrath of the Nazarenes' Messiah, was an exhibition of Jesus' beautiful kindness the remembrance of which never failed to move him profoundly.

**Obedience of faith.** Obedience that springs from or consists in faith. On faith, cf. 1:16.

7. **In Rome.** These words were omitted in some texts. See Introduction, p. 67.

**Saints.** Holy persons. A common designation of all Christians and not of a special class of Christians. The word indicates something worthy of reverence; God is holy. Any thing or person set apart for God's service is in this sense holy; the furniture of the tabernacle was called holy. The word describes also the character demanded of those set apart for God's service. Christians, therefore, are persons who are devoted to the service of God in all the occupations of human society and possess the growing good will, or love, requisite for such service.

- (2) *Introductory explanation of his years of strange delay in visiting Rome and announcement that he will soon come. The delay has not been due to any lack of concern for them or to any failure to appreciate their importance in the Christian world, 1:8-15.*

"First of all I wish you to know that out of my daily fellowship with Jesus Christ, grateful prayer for all of you rises to my God. I thank him that your loyal devotion to Jesus Christ is being talked about by all our brotherhood throughout the world (8). I know that you wonder why I, who profess such gratitude to God for you, never visit you but am always turning back when a few more days of travel would bring me to you. Perhaps there have even been persons (some such I have lately known, to my sorrow

8. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world.

and theirs!) who have endeavored to raise in your minds doubt about my sincerity. I solemnly call God to witness—God whom I serve with sincerity in my very soul as I carry everywhere the Good News about his Son which he has entrusted to me—that your name is always on my lips at prayer time (9), and that particularly of late I have been asking that God's invincible will, which always bears me onward, might now finally bring me to you (10). For I do greatly desire to see you in order that I may make you strong and steady in your allegiance to the Lord by sharing with you some of the wonderful power that is mine through contact with his Spirit (11). I would better say, that we may both be comforted by the loyal devotion to Jesus Christ which each will find in the other (12). Let me repeat it. You must not fail to realize, Brothers, that I have often definitely planned to visit you—no matter what others say to the contrary—and it is only because of insurmountable hindrances produced by some of these slanderers in Achaia, Asia and Galatia that I have hitherto failed to come. I certainly want to feel that some of the Christian character in Rome is the product of my labor, just as is the case in other parts of the great Gentile world (13).

I have a debt to discharge to men of Greek culture as well as to the cruder peoples who will constitute my next great field of work (cf. 15: 24), to men trained in the pursuit and teaching of wisdom, as well as to the unthinking folk, for God has made me a trustee of the Gospel that he sends through me to both. It is theirs and I owe it to them (14). So I am eager, in so far as God allows me to plan my own career, to preach the Gospel to you, wise and cultured men of Rome (15)."

**8. Through Jesus Christ.** Paul felt it to be through Jesus Christ that God had corrected the colossal and guilty blunder of his religious life. While he was persecuting the Nazarenes he had "been laid hold on by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3: 12). He found that Jesus Christ did not let go his "hold" upon him but remained with him in the living fellowship of faith. "Christ liveth in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God" (Gal. 2: 20). So in his religious life all thanksgiving and petition rose spontaneously and normally through Jesus Christ to God. Faith, cf. 1: 16.

**The whole world.** An hyperbole that would be easily understood by his readers; Christians presumably were well informed about the spread of the Christian movement throughout the

9. For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in my prayers
10. making request, if by any means now at length I may be prospered by the will of God to come unto you.
11. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

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Empire. Paul does not wish the Roman Christians to consider his apparent neglect of them evidence of inadequate appreciation.

9. **God is my witness.** There is an intensity of feeling evident in all this paragraph which indicates that there is a good deal to be read between the lines. Paul wrote this letter at the close of a most strenuous conflict with certain Christian leaders who were violently opposed to him. He had driven them from the field in Corinth, where he was writing this letter, but he knew that their opposition had by no means ceased. He knew that they would do everything they could to prevent the success of his proposed mission in Spain (15: 24, 28), and would be particularly eager to prevent his receiving the support of the Roman Christians in this enterprise. They had possibly already made some effort to prejudice the Roman Christians against him. Anyway he felt that they might make a point against him by representing that although he had several times come as far west as Corinth he had never showed any interest in the Christians at Rome until the time came when he could use them for the furtherance of one of his ambitious projects. Then he seemed all at once to be greatly interested in them. Paul most solemnly asserts that on the contrary he has often planned ("for many years" 15:23) to make them a visit, and is always praying for them as a most famous (v. 8) part of his great Gentile world parish.

11. **Some spiritual gift.** A spiritual "gift" was the power to do something unusual, or even miraculous, as a result of contact with the Spirit of God. Such "gifts" had been much discussed recently in Corinth (I Cor. 12). Paul regarded some of them as extremely desirable (I Cor. 12:31) and seems to have felt himself able to secure them for others. (Cf. Gal. 3:5, II Cor. 12:12, II Tim. 1:6.)

**To the end ye may be established.** The purpose of the gifts was establishment in character (cf. I Cor. 12:7, 14:4-5, Eph. 4:11-16).

12. that is, that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.
13. And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (and was hindered hitherto), that I might have some fruit in you also, even as in the rest of the Gentiles.
14. I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.
15. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome.

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14. **I am debtor.** Paul was debtor in the sense that the trustee of a fund or the executor of an estate owes that which he holds in trust to those for whom it has been designated. He considered himself a "trustee" of the Gospel (I Thess. 2:4) and a "steward," that is, one who disburses to others that which his employer has designated for them. (R.V. marginal reading "stewardship" Col. 1:25, and I Cor. 4:1). The one entrusted with a letter to deliver "owes" the letter to the person to whom he has been sent with it.

**Barbarians.** Those without Greek culture. He has in mind his prospective work among Spaniards (15:28) and perhaps even Britons and Germans. Up to this time he had worked largely in cities of Greek culture.

15. **As much as in me is.** The meaning of the Greek is obscure. It is probably to be connected in thought with v. 13: "I purposed to come unto you but was hindered," and with v. 16: "I am not ashamed" to come to Rome. That is, "so far as my own feelings and my own effort to plan my itinerary are concerned, I am ready for Rome."

(3) *Introductory statement of the general theme: the Good Tidings of Righteousness and Salvation Through Faith Possible for All Men by the Power of God, 1:16-17.*

"Do not think that shame has kept me from your cultured city for I am not ashamed of the gospel. I know that it will seem to Roman ears an improbable story of ambitious weakness told by an unskilled tongue. But God's power is in the message and it brings every man who obeys it out from the dominion of sin into the glad life of purity and joy which shall be ours in fulness when Jesus Christ introduces the New Age of which we even now have our glorious foretaste. The message comes both to Jew and to



16. For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that

Greek, to the Jew first in the course of history because God has long been using this nation as the channel through which he would pour his truth into the life of the world, but no less really in these latter days to the world of Greek culture (v. 16). I say the gospel is God's powerful way of saving all classes of men from unrighteous living and its consequences, for it describes a righteousness of life like in kind to his own and by his glorious forgiveness made possible for men. It is a righteousness which in men begins with loving allegiance to Jesus Christ as living Lord and manifests its growth throughout life in an ever strengthening allegiance to him. In this faith it begins and ends. This is nothing less than the wonderful fulfilment of God's ancient promise through the prophet that the man whose righteousness springs from faith shall live in the New Age (17)."

16. **I am not ashamed of the gospel.** Paul's experience had taught him that from the Greco-Roman standpoint the gospel might bring shame and ridicule to its advocate. To the casual Greco-Roman view Paul was a bald headed little Jew (Acts of Paul and Thecla) going about the world trying in rather crude lectures (II Cor. 10: 10) to persuade people to believe that one of his unpopular fellow countrymen, crucified in Judea a quarter of a century before at the instigation of the leaders of his own nation, had been raised from the dead, taken up to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Jews' god, and that he would soon return to judge and rule the world! In Athens, only a few hours' journey from where he was writing, the university professors and students had made sport of his ideas (Acts 17: 18, 32). These ideas seemed to them to brand him as an unmistakable "fool" (I Cor. 1: 23). In the near future he was to hear a friendly Roman procurator interrupt him and abruptly terminate his public address with the charitable suggestion that his close application to the study of ancient literature had weakened his mind! (Acts 26: 24). **The gospel.** See note on verse 1. **Salvation.** The word salvation had a long history behind it both among Greeks and Jews. Among the Jews it had designated the period when the nation would be delivered from its enemies (Luke 1: 71). In Paul's usage it is "rescue" from the evil powers who dominate the present age (Col. 1: 13). It is rescue from the penalties of the Messiah's judgment which will overwhelm those evil powers and all whom they control. And it is of course rescue from the kind of conduct that leads to those penalties. It is primarily a future experience: the day of salvation is nearer than it was when we began believing (Rom.

believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.  
 17. For therein is revealed a righteousness of God by

13:11). But in a sense it is also a present experience. The acquittal of the judgment day has been practically pronounced for him who has believed in Jesus as Lord, and he has already begun to have certain "spiritual" experiences that constitute a foretaste and pledge of the life that will follow in the New Age of spirit which the judgment day introduces (Rom. 8:23-25, II Cor. 5:4-5).

**Believeth.** Our English translation contributes to some confusion of thought by using two different English words for the same Greek root. This danger of confusion in Romans begins at this point where we have "believeth" in v. 16 and "faith" in v. 17, although the corresponding Greek words are simply two different forms of the same root (*pisteuo* and *pistis*). Paul uses the word "to believe," or "to have faith," in various ways some of which will appear in the further study of this letter. (See Sanday-Headlam, pp. 31-34). In general the object of the verb is the personality of God, or Jesus Christ the revelation of God. Believing in a person is accepting him as what he is represented to be and *treating him accordingly*. It always in Paul's usage involves *action*. There must be some reason for thinking that the person is what he is represented to be. Therefore whether or not one shall proceed to believe in a person depends on what he sees reason for believing about him. What is known about him is generally sufficient simply to make it probable that he is what he is represented to be. Final conviction is attained only after he has been treated as he probably ought to be and some convincing demonstration in personal experience has followed. The "belief," or "faith," of a man in his physician or in his friend is developed in this way. Believing in Jesus as Lord was regarding him, for certain sufficient reasons, as being what the word "Lord" was understood by Paul to mean and then treating him accordingly, that is, becoming his "bondservant" (1:1), gladly surrendering to him the control of the personality and cooperating with him for the realization of his ideal in life.

**The Jew first.** To Paul the Jew seems always to have been specially favored by God. (3:1-2; 9:4-5; 11:18).

**The Greek.** Any person of Greek culture, no matter what his nationality, provided he was not a Jew. The Jew and the Greek include the civilized world. The Barbarians have been already included in the scope of the gospel (v. 14).

**17. A righteousness of God.** "Righteousness" was essential to "salvation." The Coming Age with its salvation would be an age of righteousness. It was the beginning of such righteousness



faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live by faith.

now that would secure the "pronouncement of righteousness" ("justification"), the great verdict of acquittal, in the judgment day. Men differed widely in their ideas as to the nature of righteousness. Jesus' ideas of righteousness had differed widely from those of some at least of the religious leaders of his people. He had laid emphasis on the idea that righteousness consists in being rightly related in *heart* to other *persons*, in loving God as a Father and men as brothers. In Paul's usage also righteousness consisted in being rightly related to persons, to God as Father, to Jesus Christ as Lord, to other Christians as "Brothers." That which constituted rightness of relationship to other persons was "love." All the law was summed up in one word: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (Rom. 13:9). No alleged religious act had any value whatever unless it was an expression of love (I Cor. 13: 1-2).

The phrase "righteousness of God" would suggest to Paul's readers three meanings or implications all of which probably seemed to him appropriate in this context. This fulness of meaning made the phrase serviceable to him. It sometimes means a righteousness, or rightness, possessed by God, God's integrity of character (3: 5, 25, 26); it also means a rightness of relationship to himself on the part of men, required and made possible by God (3: 21, 22; 10: 3); and since in the Old Testament God's righteousness shows itself in mercy to sinners (Ps. 143: 1-2; 145: 7-8; cf. I John 1:9) the phrase implies a declaration by God of rightness in the case of the "ungodly" (4: 5), that is, "forgiveness." In the Gospel God reveals a way by which men through faith in Jesus Christ may possess a righteousness that is like in kind to his own, namely, love, and so experience the forgiving acquittal of the judgment day beforehand.

**By faith unto faith.** Better, from faith. This righteousness is a result of faith in Jesus Christ, and itself reacts to produce stronger faith in him. When he in faith is accepted and treated as "Lord" the righteousness that consists in love begins. Faith at once manifests its activity in love (Gal. 5: 6). This life of love toward all, which begins in faith, produces an increasing devotion to Jesus Christ; it results in more faith. It is a righteousness characterized in all its extent by everlasting faith in Jesus Christ. Through this vital faith-fellowship with Jesus Christ, presented in the gospel, there is reproduced in a man the disposition that constitutes God himself righteous: we "become the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor. 5: 51).

**As it is written.** Paul will show later that the righteousness

2. *The entire human race is unrighteous. God's wrath rests on all the race of men, a race inexcusably unrighteous in its Gentile element, and its Jewish element as well, for the Mosaic law has not availed to make the Jews righteous, 1: 18-3: 20.*

which springs from faith is the only kind of righteousness endorsed by the law and the prophets. How clearly, if at all, he recognized the historical situation that lay back of this quotation from Hab. 2: 4 is not evident. The statement, taken at its face value, says that the man who has the righteousness that springs from faith shall live, or that the righteous man shall live because of his faith. "Live" means to Paul live in the coming Messianic Age of spirit.

In the adoption of Paul's unification platform (see Introduction p. 36) it must be conceded by all parties that faith is the only resource any one has for securing righteousness. This will be stated in 3: 21-31 and for that statement the way is prepared in 1: 18-3: 20, by showing the hopelessness of men without faith. Especially in the case of the Jew it is necessary to show that the Mosaic law on which he bases his hope of righteousness has utterly failed to secure the realization of its ideal.

- (1) *The Gentile world is unrighteous. God's wrath at all unrighteousness is terribly evident in the unspeakable foulness to which he has delivered up the Gentile world that used to know him, and then with inexcusable wickedness turned away from him, 1: 18-32.*

"It is well for us men that a righteousness acceptable to God has been revealed to us by him in his gospel, for out of his heaven another revelation has been made. There has been revealed an awful indignation against all irreverence and unrighteousness of mankind who with persistent violence have kept holding down, by their unrighteous living, the truth that struggles to express itself in righteous action (18). They have knowingly done violence to God's truth, for knowledge about God had been given to them by God himself (19). Although God's endless power and divine nature do not appear directly to the eye, they might have been unmistakably inferred ever since the creation from what was then made. So they are without excuse (20), for they knew him and yet failed to yield him appreciative worship or give him thanks. Instead they began pretentious and ineffective speculations, and heavy darkness fell upon their wickedly stupid hearts (21). At the very time when they were boastfully proclaiming their wisdom

they were behaving like fools (22). Like fools they bartered away their glorious vision of the deathless God for the lifeless statue of a death-stricken man, yea even for images of birds and beasts and things that crawl (23)!

"For this cause it was that God's indignation let them go in gratifying the evil desires of their hearts to the vile lengths they reached in befouling the bodies God had given them (24)—these men who bartered away the truth of God for a lie! These men who revered and served a thing that was made when they might have worshipped the One who made it, the One who is to be called blessed in the endless ages, Amen and Amen (25)! For this cause it was, I say, that God gave them up to the filthy lusts they bred and left them to suffer in diseased bodies the well-deserved consequences of their vicious living (26-27).

"Since they did not approve of keeping God clearly before their minds God left them to be of a mind that he could not approve, to do beastly things unfit for humans to do (28). They became full of all forms of wickedness, badness, greed, meanness; full of envy, murder, wrangling, deceit, malignity; those who whisper slander (29), those who utter it openly, hateful to God, insolent, overbearing, pretentious, braggarts, ingenious inventors of evil schemes and practices, obstinately disobedient to parents (30), morally stupid, faithless, without love even for their families, pitiless persons (31). They are persons who, though they know perfectly well that by God's ordinance those who practice such vices are worthy of death, not only practice them obstinately themselves but take a devilish pleasure in seeing others do so (32)."

Paul's purpose is to show that all the race is unrighteous but he presents in vss. 18-32 a description of moral decadence which all Jews and the numerous Gentiles familiar with synagogue teaching would at once recognize as the Jewish view of the Gentile world. It appears in the Talmud (Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmud*, especially pp. 64-78), and in the *Wisdom of Solomon* (chs. 12-14) which some of the expressions here strongly suggest. Paul bears down more heavily upon the Gentiles than does the author of the *Wisdom of Solomon* who is inclined to consider the possibility that they "peradventure do but go astray while they are seeking God and desiring to find him" (13: 6), although he nevertheless thinks that "they are not to be excused" (13: 8). He also sees a "corrective admonition" (12: 20, 25, 26) in God's dealing with them which Paul does not recognize here. In Acts 14: 15-17 and 17: 27-30 there is attributed to Paul a view more like that of the *Wisdom of Solomon*. Perhaps here in the very beginning of Romans Paul is concerned to make it clear that his gospel is not tolerant of Gentile sins, as his Jewish critics and antinomian Gentile

18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness;
19. because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them.
20. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, *even* his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse:
21. because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened.
22. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
23. and changed the glory of the incorruptible God

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Christians will represent it to be (cf. 3: 8, 6: 1, 15). He is not trying to make himself a great apostolic leader among the Gentiles by being complaisant toward their sins (I Thess. 2: 5-6)! Gentile Christians too, who before they became Christians had been attracted to the synagogue because disgusted with the corruption of pagan civilization, would like to be assured of this.

18. **The wrath of God.** A common Old Testament expression and a current technical term for God's judgment (2: 5). Paul holds that God loves these people from the slums of the world whom he is about to describe (5: 8, I Cor. 6: 9-11). Therefore he does not consider wrath and love to be inconsistent. Wrath is the strong set of love against that which would ruin the object loved. The greater the love, the greater is the wrath.

19. **In them.** Among them or to them, that is, through the world about them (v. 20), not in their very natures. **God manifested it unto them.** God himself came face to face with them in the natural world.

21. **Neither gave thanks.** Because they clearly faced him their obstinate ingratitude was inexcusable. Ingratitude is the beginning of decadence into heathenism.

22. **Professing themselves to be wise.** Paul probably has in mind

- for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.
24. Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonoured among themselves:
25. for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.
26. For this cause God gave them up unto vile passions: for their women changed the natural use into that which is against nature:
27. and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was due.
28. And even as they refused to have God in *their* knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting;
29. being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness,

a good deal of the lecturing by professors of rhetoric with whom he constantly came into competition (cf. I Cor. 1: 20-22, 2: 1-5).

24. **God gave them up.** Not permanently of course. Paul is setting up a dark background against which to present the gospel "which is the power of God unto salvation" for all men.

27. Vices unmentionable in our day were so common as to be openly recognized and discussed even by literary gentlemen of high character.

28-31. Such lists of vices appear elsewhere in Paul (e.g., Gal. 5: 19-21, Col. 3: 5-9), in other Jewish literature (*Wisdom of Solomon* 14: 23-29, Philo frequently) and the ethical discussions of the Stoics. Any practical ethical or religious preacher and writer must specify vices in detail if he is to awaken the conscience. Paul may have definitely purposed to use words that were somewhat stereotyped in synagogue usage in order to indicate that he did not view Gentile wickedness with any less than the utmost

- covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
30. backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,
31. without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful:
32. who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they which practise such things are worthy of death, not only do the same but also consent with them that practise them.
2. Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, who-

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Jewish abhorrence. He was not of course dependent on any literary description of Gentile wickedness for his knowledge of Gentile character. He had been brought up in a great Gentile city and was writing in one notorious for its immorality. His converts from among the slums had poured their confessions and temptations into his ears (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

32. But also consent with them that practice them. Delight in their evil deeds. This is a climax of evil disposition. A man often likes to do himself what he feels called upon to rebuke in others, especially in younger persons. In an advanced stage of wickedness a man openly gloats over the wrong deeds of others.

(2) *The Jewish world is unrighteous. The Jewish world, so quick to condemn the unrighteousness of the Gentile world, is nevertheless, according to the verdict of its own boasted law, as inexcusably unrighteous and as subject to the wrath of God as are the Gentiles. So the whole human race stands under the judgment of God, 2: 1-3: 20.*

(a) The Jew is no better than the Gentile whom he is so quick to condemn. The Jew who is so hasty in his condemnation of the Gentile is also himself inexcusably unrighteous for he has sinned grossly against the special goodness of God to him, and he will find that God makes no distinction between Jew and Greek in the Judgment Day, 2: 1-11.

"Since those who know the right and do the wrong are clearly seen to be the inexcusable objects of God's wrath, you too are inexcusable, O Fellow Man, you whose "Amen" has been so prompt and hearty in response to the charges I have been bringing



soever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practise the same things.

against the Gentile world! While you have been condemning the other you have been pronouncing sentence upon yourself for you, the eager judge, yourself practice what you condemned (3). Evidently we both know that God's judgment rightly rests upon those who do the things that I have mentioned (2). Can you be thinking then that you, who show your realization of the sinfulness of these actions by condemning them in another, and yet do them yourself, will by any possibility escape God's wrath (3)! Or can it be that you have gone beyond the Gentile who disregarded the manifestation of God's glory made to him in the natural world, and have thought nothing of a great wealth of extra kindness, forbearance and long-suffering shown you by God! Have you utterly failed to appreciate the fact that God was striving in this way to lead you to repentance, instead of abandoning you as he did the Gentiles! (4). It seems even so. With your harsh and impenitent heart you have gone on greedily hoarding up for yourself not a 'wealth of kindness' but wrath to be experienced in the day when God's wrath and impartial judgment shall be made known (5), in the day when, as we have often read in Holy Scripture, 'He will render to every man according to his deeds' (6). Those who show by patient continuance in good deeds that they are aiming at radiant existence in God's heaven, high distinction and deathless permanence of life, will receive in the enduring life of the age to come the high ends at which they aim (7). But for those who are crafty partisans of evil, who resent the truth but yield willingly enough to untruth, there will be deep seated wrath and hot anger (8), trouble and distress for every soul of man that keeps at evil, yea first of all for the Jew, who has been in the foreground of God's providence, and also for the Greek (9). But a radiant heavenly existence, high distinction and tranquility of spirit shall be assured to every one who does what is good, to the Jew first and equally to the Greek (10). For an individual's racial or social standing counts for nothing with God. He is not a Jew's God (11)."

1. Whosoever thou art that judgest. That this describes the Jew begins to be evident to the modern reader in v. 4 and is made perfectly clear in v. 17. If the phraseology used in 1: 18-32 was at once recognized by the original readers as a rather conventional Jewish description of the Gentile world, then it was at once evident to them that Paul now turns upon the Jew. The Jew was famous

2. And we know that the judgement of God is according to truth against them that practise such things.
3. And reckonest thou this, O man, who judgest them that practise such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgement of God?
4. Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?
5. but after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement of God;
6. who will render to every man according to his works:
7. to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life:

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as a judge of the Gentiles. His common designation of them was "sinners"—"we being Jews by nature and not 'sinners of the Gentiles'" (Gal. 2: 15). That the Jew is here addressed does not prove that the readers were Jews. Such address is a rhetorical device. **Dost practice the same things.** It seems hardly probable that Paul meant to accuse the Jewish world in general of all the foul vices so frequently found in the Gentile world, nor of the idolatry emphasized in 1: 23. He means that somewhere in the preceding paragraph the average Jew, as well as the average Gentile, will find himself listed.

2. **According to truth.** That is, impartial, according to the facts, whether Jewish or Gentile facts.

3. **Reckonest thou . . . that thou shalt escape the judgement of God.** Some at least of the Jews seem to have felt that Abrahamic descent guaranteed them special consideration and immunity from God's wrath. John the Baptist seems to have known such (Matt. 3: 9). According to the Talmud there were those who felt that 'Israel's acceptance of God's law on Mt. Sinai gave to the nation an indestructible holiness.' (Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmud*, p. 50.)

6. **To every man according to his works.** Since Paul is developing the idea that all men are guilty because of their evil works these words would seem to indicate that he expected all men would be consigned to God's wrath in the judgment day. But this is not



8. but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, *shall be* wrath and indignation,
9. tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek;
10. but glory and honour and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek:
11. for there is no respect of persons with God.

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the case for he will soon speak of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ which will be the possession of a great multitude (8:29), and he will say that men were saved by faith in God before Jesus came (ch. 4). In v. 7 here also there seems to be expectation that the deeds of some will be such as to secure for them salvation. Does he then count "faith" as among the "deeds" of men? The present paragraph is obscure at this point. Paul is simply concerned here to say that Jew and Gentile are treated alike; deeds and not nationality count. There is not evidence here however of a fundamental obscurity in Paul's thought or of an inconsistency unrecognized by him, as is sometimes said to be the case. His position is that faith, and faith alone, leads to such deeds, that is, to such "patience in well doing," as will receive God's commendation in the judgment day. In Paul faith is never represented as a *substitute* for righteous deeds, but as the only efficient cause of them (8:3-4). This is incidentally a warning to Gentile Christians who may be inclined to feel that faith and baptism have made it impossible for any evil deeds they may now commit to affect their chance of final salvation.

7. **Eternal life.** The state of blessedness, begun in a certain sense now, but to be realized fully in the eternal Spirit Age to come. This verse throws some light on Paul's conception of eternal life. Three of its characteristics appear. It involves "glory," which in Paul's usage is excellence of character manifesting itself in an appropriate form of being, in a radiant spirit body acclimated in God's heaven (cf. I Cor. 15:41, 43, 44, 49, 50). It involves "honor," or the glad appreciative recognition of each other's "glory," and it is a state in which good things last. The spirit body does not decay and disappear as does the flesh body. In v. 10 "peace" is added to the description of eternal life. Peace is

12. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned under law shall be judged by law;

the tranquility of soul essential to high achievement. None of the energies of eternity are to be wasted in worry.

(b) Possession of the Jewish law is no guarantee of righteousness. The Jews' possession of the Mosaic law is no such evidence of God's favor as guarantees their escape from judgment, for the Gentiles (who certainly do not escape judgment) have in their consciences essentially the same law, 2: 12-16.

"The fact that the Jew will be holding the law of Moses in his hand when he stands before God in the judgment day will not lead God to respect his person. It is simply sin and righteousness about which inquiry will then be made. Those who have sinned without possessing a written law will go to ruin without such a law to condemn them, for I have shown that they had a knowledge of truth sufficient to make them inexcusably guilty. As many as have sinned in connection with the Mosaic law will be judged by its statements (12). It is a fatal error to suppose, as many do, that simply having been entrusted by God with his precious treasure, the law, and listening to it in the synagogue guarantees to one the standing of a righteous man in the judgment day. Nothing but doing the deeds demanded by law can give a man this standing (13). Furthermore, my countrymen are mistaken in supposing that they alone have been honored by God with the gift of his law. He has given the same to the Gentiles in another form, for we find them behaving as if they had the Mosaic law (14). The way in which they accuse and excuse in their social and business relations shows that the great ethical principles of the Mosaic law are written in their moral natures. They hear in their consciences the same law that the Jews hear in their synagogues. The possession of God's law in the conscience does not, as my countrymen all agree, guarantee to Gentiles immunity from punishment. Neither will the honor of possessing the written Mosaic law guarantee immunity to the Jew (15). It is on the basis of conduct alone, as I was saying, that God's judgment will be pronounced in the day when God will judge, through Jesus Christ, the invisible disposition of each man's heart. This is a fundamental teaching of my Gospel as I preach it everywhere. It gives no one ground for thinking that God will deal leniently with sin—whatever you may hear said to the contrary either by its critics or its deluded friends (16)."

12. **Without law.** The context shows that the Mosaic law is meant.

13. for not the hearers of a law are just before God, but the doers of a law shall be justified:
14. for when Gentiles which have no law do by nature the things of the law, these, having no law, are a law unto themselves;
15. in that they shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness there-

13. **Not the hearers of a law are just before God.** The marginal "righteous" is better than the word "just." The confusion in thought which may easily result from using the two different English words "believe" and "faith" to translate two forms of the same Greek root (see note on 1:16) is increased by using the words "just," "justify," "righteous" and "righteousness" to translate different forms of the same Greek root. When God "justifies" a man he pronounces him "righteous," that is, "all right" so far as readiness for the New Age is concerned. See note on 3:24.

Some of the Jews seem to have felt about God's giving them the law as Paul felt about God's giving his Son to men (8:32): "He that gave us his precious treasure the law, how shall he not with it freely give us all things." God's favor shown in trusting them with a treasure so precious would certainly carry them triumphantly through the judgment day (4 Esdras 5:23-27; *Apoc. Baruch* 48:24). See note on 2:3. For Paul's teaching regarding the purpose of the law see notes on ch. 7.

14. **The things of the law.** The things required by the ethical principles of the law. This does not mean that they live righteous lives sufficient to gain acquittal in the judgment day, for Paul is proving in this section of the epistle that all men are unrighteous. He had however found in his travels many gentlemen among Gentiles whose moral instincts agreed with those of the Jews trained in Mosaism, and who often followed these instincts in an imperfect way. This is better than to suppose that Paul has in mind here the Gentile Christians. The Christian way of righteousness is not introduced until 3:21.

15. **The work of the law.** The works or conduct required by the law. **Written in their hearts.** This was an unwelcome thought to many Jews who regarded the possession of the law as their own glorious and peculiar distinction. 'God had once offered the law to the Gentiles as well as the Jews, but they rejected it and had ever since been shut out from God. He cannot work upon the heathen, cannot speak through their consciences

- with, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing *them*;
16. in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ.
17. But if thou bearest the name of a Jew, and retest upon the law, and gloriest in God,
18. and knowest his will, and approvest the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law,

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since they have no law.' (Weber. *Die Lehren des Talmud*, pp. 64-66.) Doubtless there were Jews who held a far more hopeful view of Gentiles, else there would scarcely have been so many Jehovah-worshipping Gentiles found in the synagogues of the dispersion. **Conscience.** A word used by Stoic teachers, but this is no evidence that Paul was more vitally influenced by their teaching than was all the rest of the world in which he lived. **Accusing or else excusing.** They accused others and excused themselves in accordance with the same moral presuppositions that appeared among the Jews.

16. This sentence may depend grammatically on the last word of v. 13 (Sanday) in which case vs. 14-15 constitute a long and important parenthesis as our translation indicates. If Paul had been punctuating he might have preferred a dash after the last word of v. 15, referring the outcome of all that had been said above in a general way to the judgment day when character will be revealed. Vs. 14-15 are sometimes regarded as an interpolation or a later insertion by Paul (see Moffatt, *Translation of the New Testament*), or v. 16 is regarded as a later addition, but if the interpretation suggested in the paraphrase above is justified there is no need resorting to these suppositions. **My gospel.** The gospel of Christ as Paul preaches it. It was his particular interpretation of the gospel of Christ that was severely criticized by conservative Christian Jews as well as by non-Christian Jews. He seemed to be scandalously lax in exempting Gentile Christians from the necessity of obeying the details of the Mosaic law.

There were plenty of antinomian Gentile Christians also who needed to realize that their morally lax contempt for the ideals of the Mosaic law could count on no support from Paul. (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-20).

(c) Jewish unrighteousness especially flagrant. Though the Jew plumes himself upon his moral standing and is quick to con-

19. and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them that are in darkness,
20. a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth;

demn Gentile sins, he is guilty of the same sins himself, and by his scandalous conduct he disgraces the God in whom he boasts among the Gentiles whom he despises. 2:17-24.

"Let me speak to you plainly my self-confident fellow countryman. You bear the proud name 'Jew.' You rest in complacent security upon the fact that you have been made 'the custodian of God's law.' You boast of God as peculiarly a 'God of Jews' (17). You have had the special honor of being granted 'acquaintance with the will of God' in the scriptures. You hold, and approve as you think, higher standards of conduct than those that prevail among Gentiles, since you have been systematically 'instructed in the Mosaic law' (18). You fondly think of yourself as 'a guide' for those whom you call 'the blind,' 'a light' for those whom you consider to be 'in the darkness' (19), an 'educator' of the 'foolish folk,' a 'teacher' of 'infants,' one who has in the sacred law the 'finished form of knowledge and truth' (20). Now then you who are so ready to teach another, do you not give yourself the advantage of your valuable teaching? You that preach publicly against stealing, can it be that you steal (21)? You that tell men not to commit adultery, can it be that you commit adultery? You that shrink away in holy loathing from the contaminating presence of pagan idols, can it be that you sneak into the very presence of the idol in its temple and steal the offerings that pious worshipers have left there (22)? You that brag so proudly about being the custodian of God's law, do you disobey that law and thereby insult God (23)? It certainly is as true today as it was of old when the prophet said it, that the holy name of your God is brought into dishonor among foreigners by the conduct of God's own people. They think God is like his people (24)!"

17-20. Paul here uses titles and phrases by which the Jew, especially the Pharisee, commonly designated himself and expressed his sense of superiority to the unlearned among his own people and to the Gentiles.

**Guide of the blind.** This and the other designations indicate the proselyting zeal of some of the Pharisees (cf. Matt. 23: 15).  
**Babes.** Cf. Matt. 11: 25.

21. thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?
22. thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou rob temples?
23. thou who gloriest in the law, through thy transgression of the law dishonorest thou God?
24. For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you, even as it is written.

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21-24. All the sins mentioned here are not to be thought of as committed by all Jews, any more than those mentioned 1: 18-32 were committed by all Gentiles, but they were sufficiently common to be characteristic of Jewish life in the dispersion. "The Jew" had a reputation for these sins among the Gentiles.

22. **Abhorrest idols.** The pious Jew would not touch wine or meat that might have been connected with idol worship. He would not do business with a Gentile three days before or after a heathen feast when the Gentiles had presumably been defiled by contact with the apparatus of worship at a temple. Nor would he go about the streets of the city on a feast day, when he might be jostled by some worshiper fresh from temple worship. **Rob temples.** The temples stood open and sneak thievery of small offerings left at shrines was possible (cf. Acts 19: 37).

23. **Dishonorest thou God.** God is dishonored by the transgression of his law because he is thereby made to appear to be one whom no one need take into consideration; no attention need be paid to what he says.

24. **As it is written.** In Is. 52: 5 words like those indirectly quoted here appear but the thought of the passage in its context is not very applicable to this situation. The thought of Ezek. 36: 20 is more pertinent. There the Jews of the dispersion disgrace God's name by their shameful behavior. The Gentiles say of them: "These are the people of Jehovah and they came out from his land!"

(d) Righteousness a state of heart and not a matter of nationality. The only thing that can constitute a man righteous is an obedient heart; a circumcised Jew with a disobedient heart is just as bad as a disobedient Gentile; indeed an obedient Gentile



25. For circumcision indeed profiteth, if thou be a doer of the law: but if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is become uncircumcision.
26. If therefore the uncircumcision keep the ordinances of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision?
27. and shall not the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who with the letter and circumcision art a transgressor of the law?

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would be able to condemn a disobedient Jew in spite of the Jew's circumcision, 2:25-29.

"The rite of circumcision from which you hope so much as a sign that you are in an irrevocable covenant with God has a value if you keep God's law. It designates you as a confessed law keeper. But if you do not keep the law your circumcision is no better than uncircumcision (25). On the other hand if an uncircumcised man should keep the requirements of the law as they appear in his moral nature, would not God look upon him as a circumcised man? (26). May we not go further and say that a man of uncircumcised body who should keep God's law as he has it written in his moral nature would rise up in the judgment day and pronounce condemnation upon you who in the possession of the Mosaic law and circumcision transgress the law? (27). For he is not the true Jew who simply belongs to the Jewish nation, and physical circumcision is not true circumcision (28). The genuine Jew is one who has an Israelite's heart and genuine circumcision is an operation upon the heart, a heart which keeps the spirit of the law and not merely its letter. Such a man gets praise not from men, where you too much look for it, but from God (29)."

25. **Profiteth.** The wearing of a badge in public may do good if you really are what the badge indicates. It is wholesome to give expression by an outward act to an inner state. To be a declared servant of God brought God's approval.

26. **The uncircumcision keep the ordinances of the law.** This is a purely hypothetical case for Paul is arguing that no one,—apart from faith which he has not yet introduced into the discussion,—does do this.

27. **By nature.** By birth and nationality. **With the letter.** In possession of the written law.

28. For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:
29. but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

29. **Circumcision is that of the heart.** A heart that has been marked as one that does God's will.

(e) An answer to Jewish protests and quibbles often heard in the synagogue. It has indeed been an advantage to be a Jew rather than a Gentile but the advantage has not been such as to give superior righteousness and immunity from God's wrath. 3:1-9. (This recognition of Jewish advantage will incidentally be a wholesome rebuke for such Gentile Christians as desire to find in Paul an anti-Semite like themselves.)

"If God esteems the Gentile as highly as he does the Jew, is quick to appreciate Gentile righteousness and condemn Jewish sin, does it follow that the Jews in all their glorious national history have had no advantage? Has there been no gain in being a party to Jehovah's great covenant of which circumcision is the sign? (1). Yes, indeed, there has been much advantage in every way. Chief of all there has been the great outstanding fact that the Jews have been entrusted with God's sacred oracles and have lived under the inspiring influence of the great messianic hope that these oracles present (2). Even if some men have been faithless to their circumcision covenant with Jehovah, their faithlessness will not make him faithless. He will not withdraw the messianic promise. He has not kept his Messiah in the heavens (3). One must not imagine for a moment that the eternal truthfulness of God's promises will fail even if 'every man should become a liar.' Let us not forget the scripture which says: 'In order that thou mayst be pronounced righteous when men consider thy truthful words of promise and that thou mayst be triumphantly recognized as truthful when thou art contending with any man.' (4). This suggests what I have often heard my Jewish countrymen say in protesting against the charge of unrighteousness brought against them in my preaching of the gospel, namely, that it would be unfair for God to bring his wrath upon them, since their unrighteousness serves a useful purpose: it makes God's righteousness stand out more distinctly by contrast. We surely cannot say this? (I am speaking as if a man could venture to



3. What advantage then hath the Jew? or what is the profit of circumcision?
2. Much every way: first of all, that they were intrusted with the oracles of God.

judge God by human standards of fairness) (5). Certainly the idea is wholly wrong. See to what unwelcome consequences it logically leads the Jew.

In the first place, if it were true, God could never judge the wicked Gentile world—which the Jew believes he so surely will judge—for Gentile unrighteousness makes God's righteousness distinct by contrast, just as truly as does Jewish unrighteousness (6). A second logical consequence of this idea, and one very unwelcome to those who advance the idea, is that it would actually make it impossible for them any longer to apply even to me the title 'sinner' which they have so heartily and persistently conferred upon me! For the lies they so freely accuse me of uttering certainly would serve by contrast to accentuate God's truthfulness (7)! And finally their idea leads to another conclusion which would certainly be unwelcome to them. They would not really be willing would they, to go the logical length of their excuse and actually adopt the maxim they slanderously attribute to us: 'Let us do evil that good may come'?—Those who do attribute this maxim to us will find out that God does judge the world and includes them in his condemnation (8)!

What then shall be our conclusion? Has God, in giving us Jews certain advantages over Gentiles, really showed a preference for us? Certainly not in all particulars and not at all in the point of recognizing any superior righteousness in us, for we have brought Jews as well as Greeks under the charge of sin" (9).

1. The paragraph vs. 1-8 has almost a tumultuous excess of thought and suggests the tumultuous excitement into which Paul had thrown many a synagogue audience by the assertions that have just preceded. Indignant Jews had hurled these questions at him perhaps even before his discourse was ended and after it was over there had been hours of heated discussion on these points. In the strife of the last few months over the Corinthian situation he had repeatedly gone over the points alluded to here. The original readers who were familiar with these ideas probably had little of the difficulty we experience in following Paul's line of thought.

2. **The oracles of God.** Especially promises, as is evident from v. 4, and chiefly the great promise of the Messiah specified in 1:2-3. Although Paul held that these oracles promised messi-

3. For what if some were without faith? shall their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God?
4. God forbid: yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy words, And mightest prevail when thou comest into judgment.
5. But if our unrighteousness commendeth the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who visiteth with wrath? (I speak after the manner of men.)
6. God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?
7. But if the truth of God through my lie abounded

anic salvation to Gentiles as well as Jews (4: 9; 12, Gal. 3: 8), yet it was the Jew only who had experienced the uplifting influence incident to having this promise always before his mind. Other advantages of the Jew are mentioned in 9: 4-5. **Some were without faith.** Paul faced the fact that many Jews had not been ready to receive the fulfillment of the promise made in Jesus Christ. He will discuss their case at length in chapters 9-11.

4. **Every man a liar.** Ps. 116: 11. Even if every man should be false we must not doubt the reliability of God. **Comest into judgment.** In Matt. 5: 40, I Cor. 6: 1 the word means "to have litigation with."

5. **Commendeth the righteousness of God.** By making it conspicuous in contrast. **Is God unrighteous?** Perhaps better: "What shall we say? Not 'God is unrighteous in bringing wrath upon us?'"

6. **How shall God judge the world?** If the Jew could escape punishment because his sin had emphasized God's righteousness, so could the Gentile and there would then be no world judgment.

7. **But if.** Better, marginal reading, "For if." A second objection to the position taken in v. 5. **My lie.** This is not merely a suppositional case—any one's lie. V. 8 shows that Paul is talking about his own case. Enemies in Corinth have lately loudly accused him of lying (II Cor. 1: 17, 4: 2, 6: 8, 11: 31) and he thinks that echoes of the accusation will have reached Rome.

unto his glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner?

8. and why not (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? whose condemnation is just.
9. What then? are we in worse case than they? No, in no wise: for we before laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin;

8. **And why not.** Better "And certainly not," that is, "They certainly will not say will they" etc. There is no "why" in the Greek. R. V. and most translators continue the force of "why" in the last clause of v. 7, but as indicated in the paraphrase v. 8 may be regarded as a third objection to the position taken in v. 5, the first and second objections being found respectively in v. 6 and v. 7. **Let us do evil.** This view of Paul's Gospel he will discuss in 6: iff.

9. **What then.** What then is the conclusion? **Are we in worse case than they?** American Revision: **Are we better than they?** The single Greek word so translated has been the subject of much discussion. It occurs nowhere else in the New Testament and only once in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament. Perhaps, "Are we given the preference over them?" Paul has said in vs. 1-3 that the Jew has had certain advantages that the Gentile has not had. Have these advantages then been such as to give the Jew a place in God's esteem above that of the Gentile? **No, in no wise.** Or "Not in all particulars" and certainly not in the point of righteousness for, as Paul has asserted before Jews, and Greeks alike are regarded by God as sinners. Paul never divested himself of a certain Jewish pride of race, growing out of his conviction that the Jews were in a peculiar sense 'God's people.' (11: 1-2, 28-29.) They were the original, carefully cultivated olive root, while the Gentiles were wild olive grafts (11: 17-24).

(f) The Jewish law itself proves the Jews' unrighteousness. The Jewish law itself speaks of its subjects in scathing terms. Citizenship in a nation so described by its own law cannot guarantee righteousness. If the simple fact that a man is called a Gentile is *prima facie* evidence that he is a sinner, so also to call a man a Jew is equivalent to calling him a sinner. So all the

10. as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one;
11. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God;
12. They have all turned aside, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one:
13. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their

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human race stands under the judgment of God and there is no hope to be looked for from law, 3:10-20.

"The charge that Jews are sinners stands clearly stated in the Jewish scriptures themselves. Listen to the indictment they present: 'There is not even one righteous person (10). There is no intelligent, thoughtful man who seeks after God (11). All have wandered off. They have together become useless. There is no one ready to do kindness—not a single individual (12). Their throat is like an open sepulchre belching out the defiling stench of a corrupt heart. Their tongues speak treachery. Their words sting fatally as if the deadly poison of asps lay just behind their lips (13). Their mouths are full of cursings and bitter speech (14). They run with eager swiftness to a spot where they think there will be a chance to shed blood (15). They bring distress and misery wherever they go (16). They know nothing about the way of peace (17). It never occurs to them to fear God' (18).

Now we know that the statements made in a law are addressed to the persons that live under the jurisdiction of that law. These terrible words of the Jewish law are therefore addressed to Jews. The purpose of such strenuous utterances to those who are accustomed to regard themselves as God's favorites is to shut up every mouth that might be inclined to claim righteousness and to bring the entire world under the penalty inflicted by a righteous God (19). Because deeds of obedience to law, such as the Jew rests his claim of righteousness upon, can never make a man righteous. Law does not fit flesh for judgment. What law does is simply to make a man clearly conscious of sin (20)."

10. As it is written. The statements that follow are mostly taken from the Psalms as the marginal references indicate. The thought is not that this description fits in all its details every individual Jew in every age, but that citizenship in a nation of which God could so speak surely would not confer righteousness.

tongues they have used deceit: the poison of asps is under their lips:

14. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:
15. Their feet are swift to shed blood;
16. Destruction and misery are in their ways;
17. And the way of peace have they not known:
18. There is no fear of God before their eyes.
19. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgement of God:
20. because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for through the law *cometh* the knowledge of sin.

19. **The Law.** Paul sometimes designates by the word law any part of the Old Testament,—here the Psalms. Often he uses the word in a narrower sense—the Mosaic law (*e. g.* Gal. 3: 17).

20. **The works of the law.** Better, marginal reading “works of law.” The phrase had a technical meaning among many Jews. It designated specific acts of obedience to particular commandments, each such act winning for a man a certain credit in terms of righteousness. If his credits exceeded his debits when his life account was balanced he was “righteous.” (Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmud* pp. 270-276.) This mechanical view is of course not the only one that appears in the Talmud. (Schechter, *Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology*; Herford, *Pharisaism*). **Justified.** Pronounced righteous, or acceptable to God, or treated as righteous. See on 2: 13 and 3: 24. **Through the law cometh the knowledge of sin.** Better, “through law a clear knowledge of sin.” Paul will show in 7: 7 ff. that the function of law is not to serve as a sufficient and direct means of gaining righteousness. It is rather to make a man realize how badly off he is, not simply by showing him what he ought to do, but by forcing upon his consciousness the fact that because of Sin’s power over him he will not do what he ought to do.

3. *Righteousness by faith available for guilty humanity. Although no one has so obeyed God's law as to make him a righteous man, yet a righteousness is nevertheless possible for all men, Gentiles as well as Jews, as the law and prophets have long been testifying. It is the righteousness that belongs to him who has faith in Jesus Christ, the one whom God has set forth to give evidence by his bloody death that God has not been lacking in righteous abhorrence*

"But now, without any such use of law as our Jewish teachers make of it, a way of becoming righteous has been revealed by God, not a new way in our day to be sure, for it has long been advocated by the law and the prophets (21). God's way of making men righteous is through their belief in Jesus Christ, that is, through the surrender of their lives as bondmen to him, their living Lord. It is a way of becoming righteous that is available for *all* who do so believe in him, whether they be Jews or Gentiles. God makes no distinction between them in this particular (22). Both need this righteousness for both have sinned and thereby lost their hope of sharing the radiant and holy life of God's heavenly spirit world (23). The only resource of both Jew and Gentile is to be pronounced righteous, that is, to be forgiven, by God, simply as a gift, not as something they can do enough righteous deeds to deserve, but as an expression of his beautiful kindness ("grace"). He is able so to pronounce them righteous because of the emancipation from bondage to sin and its consequences, experienced by them in the vital and purifying relation to Jesus Christ and his death which is theirs when, as willing bondmen, they accept him as Lord (24). God it was who introduced Jesus Christ into the world, and in such a way as to put his own righteousness ever more beyond question. For God set him forth in his blood as a conciliatory offering, provided not by men, but strange to say in amazing grace by God himself, an offering of conciliatory power for all who gather about him as the Lord of their lives in faith. God's free forgiveness of sin for centuries—an almost indifferent passing over of sin it may have seemed—might make men feel that he lacked the abhorrence of sin requisite in a righteous God (25). But, I say again, now in our day God has made his righteous abhorrence of sin forevermore evident by setting forth in awesome blood Jesus Christ, so that now without raising suspicion of his righteousness he may pronounce righteous the sinful man who



*of sin during all the generations in which he has been forgiving the sins of penitent men. Though this righteousness is apart from law, it is not hostile to law; indeed it is actually the result the law sought but always failed to secure, 3: 21-31.*

21. But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

stands in penitent submission before Jesus as his living Lord (26). Where then is there place left for the boastful spirit with which the Jew is accustomed to speak of his righteousness? There is no place for it. What principle deprives it of its place? The principle of righteousness gained by many deeds of obedience to law? No indeed, for by that principle he would have no righteousness at all, while now he really does have righteousness. No, his famous boasting is stopped by the very principle of faith in Jesus which gave him his righteousness, for a man cannot brag of what has been simply given to him without his desert; he cannot brag of being pronounced righteous because of simply committing himself in penitential obedience to the control of Jesus Christ (27). For we do hold that this is the way in which a man is pronounced righteous, without any proud effort to accumulate righteousness by many ostentatious acts of valuable obedience to law (28). This is the way *any* man must be pronounced righteous. Is it Jews only that have this privilege? Is the God who is revealed in Jesus' bloody death the God of Jews alone? Is he not also the God of Gentiles? Surely he must be, unless there are two Gods, a Jewish God and a Gentile God (29). But there is only one God as we Jews more insistently than any others declare. This one and only God therefore will pronounce both Jews and Gentiles righteous on the same condition, namely, faith (30). Do we by this argument destroy law and does faith make the purpose of law null? No indeed! We establish law, for men who live in faith-fellowship with Jesus Christ will actually live the life of love which the law held up as its ideal but was never able to enforce (31). (Cf. 8: 1-3, 13: 8-10)."

21. **Apart from the law.** Law brings to light sin in the heart and pronounces the penalty of God's wrath upon it, but God has another and hopeful way of dealing with sin. **A righteousness of God.** Suggestive of several ideas to the original readers. See note on 1: 17. Here chiefly a righteousness possible for men, a life

22. even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe; for there is no distinction;
23. for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God;
24. being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

rightly related to God and men and leading to the great pronouncement of righteousness, or acquittal, in the judgment day. **Witnessed by the law and the prophets.** Not simply foretold by them as a future possibility but also urged upon their contemporaries as the only possible righteousness. Paul holds that in the centuries before Christ all who were righteous were righteous by faith, even Abraham and David (4: 1-8). He has just said (v. 20) that no one could ever become righteous through connection with law. In Gal. 3: 23-25 he seems to contradict this by speaking of a period "before faith came." The contradiction is only apparent for there too he holds that righteousness cannot possibly be gained by connection with law (Gal. 3: 10-12). The phrase "before faith came" may mean before Christ, the revelation of God, the clearly revealed object of faith, came. Before that time men had been "under the law" (Gal. 3: 23), not that they might become righteous by obeying it (Gal. 3: 11) but that it might drive them to the penitent contrite heart of faith in God so emphasized by Psalmists and prophets. After the clearer revelation of God, the object of faith, had been made in the person of Christ, the law ceased to serve even this subsidiary purpose (Gal. 3: 23-24). Christ made a more pungent, as well as a more hopeful, appeal to the conscience than did the law.

22. **Faith in Jesus Christ.** *Belief* in Jesus Christ. The Greek word translated faith is simply the substantive form of the verb translated "believe." **All them that believe.** Believe in Jesus Christ, that is, yield the control of their lives to him as living Lord, become his "bondmen" (1: 1). See note on 1: 16.

23. **Glory of God.** Note on 2: 7.

24. **Being justified.** Being pronounced righteous, or acceptable to God. The man who stands before Jesus, in the "faith" or "belief" that recognizes Jesus' Lordship is, in advance of the judgment day, pronounced by God to be "righteous," that is rightly related to God and men. This act of God involves three things that will appear in the further study of Paul's thought: (1) the recognition of the penitent man's present relation to God and men as of necessity right, because in taking Jesus as his Lord he necessarily begins to adopt Jesus' loving relationship to God as



25. whom God set forth *to be* a propitiation, through

Father and men as brothers; (2) the free forgiveness of his guilty past, repentance for which is necessarily an element of his submissive belief in Jesus; (3) the taking of measures to keep him permanently right in the future, the granting to him of inspiring spiritual fellowship with Christ, or the strengthening fellowship of the Holy Spirit. **Grace.** See note on 1:5. **Through the redemption.** It is through, or in connection with, the emancipation of men from the power of evil, that God's pronouncement of righteousness takes place. Redemption is a word which sometimes designates the happy future of men when in the Spirit Age they will be "redeemed," or emancipated, from the evils of this present age. The days just before the Son of Man comes in the clouds will be the time when this "redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). They will then experience the "redemption of their bodies" (Romans 8:23) from the reign of decay and death. The presence of the Holy Spirit marks them now as men ready for this future "day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30). It is also a present phenomenon and as such is nearly equivalent to forgiveness: in Christ we have our "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses" (Eph. 1:7). Here in Romans it is both present and future. It is that present emancipation from the power of evil which comes with God's forgiveness, and which will ultimately issue in the new era of emancipation. **That is in Christ Jesus.** This emancipation is wrought by what Jesus Christ is and does and is experienced in the disciple's close connection with him. The fact that Jesus' death is immediately mentioned in v. 25 would seem to imply, though it does not assert, that there is connection between his death and the believer's emancipation. This is more apparent in 5:9 and is explicitly asserted in Eph. 1:7.

25. **Whom God set forth.** The whole redemptive process originated in the love of God (cf. 5:8) and cannot therefore be regarded as an effort to placate God or make him feel more kindly toward men. The word translated "set forth" sometimes means "to purpose," that is, to set before one's self as his aim (*e. g.*, 1:13). So *e. g.*, Weinel, *Paul* p. 306, and Lightfoot, *Notes on the Epistles of Paul*. But better: "Made to stand out clearly in the sight of all men." (So LXX Ps. 54:3, 86:14). The figure that follows is that of an imposing votive monument or a vast sacrifice covered with blood. **A propitiation.** Or an adjective, "propitiatory." The word is used by Paul only here. The idea is that of conciliation and is the same as that expressed by the words reconciliation and reconcile which Paul frequently uses of Jesus' activity in bringing God and men together. (Rom. 5:10, 11; II

faith, by his blood, to shew his righteousness, be-

Cor. 5: 18, 19, 20; Col. 1: 20, 21; Eph. 2: 16). In all these instances it is men who are reconciled (see note on 5: 10). In the Greek translation of Ex. 25: 17 (LXX v. 16) the mercy seat which rested on the ark was called a "propitiatory cover" and in the sentences which follow (and elsewhere also) the word "propitiatory" alone is used to designate the mercy seat. This has led to the supposition that Paul here represented Jesus as the mercy seat or place of mercy. (Origen, Ritschl; see discussion and adverse view in Lightfoot, *Notes on the Epistles of Paul*, p. 272.) In that case Jesus, the mercy seat, is sprinkled with his own blood which seems to make it improbable that Paul had this figure in mind. (Against it, Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, pp. 124 ff.)

If the word be regarded as an adjective the noun to be supplied may be either some word meaning votive monument or sacrifice. If the former then Paul's figure would be that of a great monument stained with blood, erected to secure and commemorate the solemn reconciliation of God and men. In favor of such an interpretation is the fact that the word propitiatory is found on the pedestals of votive monuments or statues. In Paul's day there was on the island of Cos a votive offering which bore an inscription stating that it was put in place by the people as "propitiatory to the gods" (*theois hilasterion*) in behalf of the welfare of the Emperor Augustus (Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 131). According to Josephus (*Ant.* 16: 7: 1) Herod built a "propitiatory monument" of white stone at the mouth of David's sepulchre to compensate for his sacrilegious attempt to rob the grave of its supposed treasure.

Among other figures which Paul uses to set forth different aspects of the significance of Jesus' death is that of the sacrifice. Twice he explicitly refers to sacrifice, once in general terms, "an offering and a sacrifice" (Eph. 5: 2) and again more particularly to a paschal sacrifice (I Cor. 5: 7). It may be also that the idea of sacrifice lies back of statements which represent Jesus as dying for us although this is not necessarily the case. If that be true here, then the figure is that of a vast sacrifice covered with blood, set up by God in great love before the eyes of all men as means and sign of reconciliation between God and men. The particular effect of such an exhibition which Paul is concerned to emphasize here is not its "redemptive" value, which is simply assumed and not emphasized. The point he is concerned to emphasize will be noted in a moment.

**Through faith.** The phrase modifies "propitiatory." It is through faith, or in the case of the man of faith, that the concilia-

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cause of the passing over of the sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God;

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tory power of the great spectacle is realized. It is the man who stands before the bloody Christ whom God has "set forth" as a revelation of himself and who yields himself in submissive faith to the control of his blood stained Lord who experiences the power of reconciliation. **By his blood.** American Revision: **In his blood.** May modify either "set forth" or "propitiatory": "whom God set forth in his blood propitiatory through faith," or "whom God set forth propitiatory by his blood through faith." To speak of the blood as the object of faith—"faith in his blood"—is not in accord with ordinary Pauline usage. The R. V. indicates this by placing a comma after faith.

**To show his righteousness.** This phrase is the key to the whole passage as is evident from the fact that its idea appears three times in the short space of two verses (25-26). The third time is 26b where "just" should be translated "righteous" as indicated in the margin—"that he might himself be righteous and pronounce righteous etc." Evidently the synagogue criticised Paul's gospel on the ground that it attributed to God an unrighteously lenient attitude toward sin. "Sinners of the Gentiles" were encouraged by Paul to believe that without becoming Jews and without assuming any obligation to keep the Mosaic law they could consider their sins forgiven, could look forward to survival after the judgment day, and to participation in God's New Spirit Age with all the traditional confidence of the Jew, provided only that they would enroll themselves as the believing bondmen of Jesus Christ. Furthermore as Paul looked back across the centuries he taught that God had always been forgiving the sins of men, in view of their penitent faith in him, and not because of their unfailing obedience to the Mosaic law. Paul seems to admit that it was not unnatural for the synagogue to think that this view did imply in God an unrighteous lack of deep feeling against sin. Paul had very likely himself once thought so. But he maintains that since God has set forth Jesus in his blood, no one can any longer doubt God's righteous abhorrence of sin. How does the sight of Jesus in his blood show this? Paul does not explain but assumes that in the minds of his readers there are associations connected with blood which prove an abhorrence of sin on the part of him who presents the blood.

The fact that God has set forth Jesus in blood will show conclusively to their minds that no matter how leniently he had dealt with sinners in the past he really did and does have a righteous

26. for the shewing, *I say*, of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus.
27. Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a law of faith.

abhorrence of sin. The sight of blood does not arouse any such associations in our minds, but there is found elsewhere in Paul an idea that appeals to us strongly. In Col. 1: 19-20 Paul uses a figure somewhat like that used here in Romans. It is the figure of a bloody cross set up in the sight not only of the whole earth but of all the heavens, establishing "reconciliation" and "peace" throughout the universe. In the context he emphasizes the idea that Jesus is "the image of the invisible God" (1: 15). That is, Jesus, suffering mortal, bloody distress over the sins of men, images to all the universe the feeling of the invisible God about human sin. The same idea appears in II Cor. 5: 19 where the death of Christ is under discussion. There it is said that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself." Paul guards against the idea that God did something *to* Jesus and insists rather that he did something *in* Jesus. In the moral distress of Jesus over the sins of men God gained expression for his own feeling. No one therefore who sees Jesus whom God has set forth in blood, in whom God has set himself forth in blood, can doubt God's righteous abhorrence of sin. God can henceforth pronounce righteous the penitent man who has faith in Jesus, without any risk to his own reputation for righteousness. **Because of.** Made necessary because of. **Passing over** (*paresis*). May be simply equivalent to forgiveness (*aphesis*) but perhaps indicates a lesser degree of attention, more apparent indifference (cf. Acts 17: 30). **Just.** Righteous; justifier, one who pronounces righteous.

26. **Faith in Jesus.** Marginal reading "faith of Jesus" but much more probably "faith in Jesus." Same construction in Mk. 11: 22, "faith in God." The author of Hebrews (12: 2) represents Jesus as the great illustration of faith in God and one might be inclined to find here in Romans an expression of the idea that the one who takes Jesus as his Lord shares Jesus' faith in God. But Paul does not commonly speak of Jesus' faith in God. He rather regards Jesus as the revelation of God who is himself therefore the object of faith.

27. **The glorying.** So characteristic of the Jew. **Manner of law,** law here equivalent to "principle."

28. We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.
29. Or is God *the God* of Jews only? is he not *the God* of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also:
30. if so be that God is one, and he shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith.
31. Do we then make the law of none effect through faith? God forbid: nay, we establish the law.

4. *Abraham and David witnesses for righteousness by faith. The case of Abraham, the great founder of the Jewish nation, confirmed by the words of David, the great Jewish king, proves that no righteousness except that of faith is possible for Jews and that God always planned to have Gentiles also possess it, Ch. 4.*

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30. **By faith.** Through faith. It is hard to see any difference in thought for Paul holds that Jew and Gentile gain righteousness in the same way.

31. **The law.** Margin "law," the conscience law (2: 14, 15) as well as the Mosaic law. **Establish.** See paraphrase.

(1) *Are the men of the synagogue better than Abraham! Since Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, had only righteousness by faith, how can lesser Jews expect anything more pretentiously meritorious for themselves? 4:1-5.*

"I have said that there is no place left for that boasting which is so common among Jews when they compare themselves in respect to righteousness with Gentile 'sinners.' I know from experience that some one will at once cite Abraham and maintain that he, our natural forefather, surely had reason to boast of his righteousness when he compared himself with the wicked Gentiles about him (1). I welcome the appeal to Abraham's case, for he had a righteousness earned by works if any Jew ever did and if he had such righteousness he might indeed well boast of

4. What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, hath found?
2. For if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not toward God.

it as he compared himself with his ungodly contemporaries, for certainly none of them had it (2). Of course he could not boast as he faced God for he would have simply succeeded in doing what he ought to have done, his mere duty. I am well content, as I said, to appeal to Abraham's case, for what does the Scripture represent it to be? It represents with absolute clearness that Abraham had nothing but the faith-righteousness I am advocating. The statement is explicit: "Abraham had faith in God and his faith was set down as righteousness" (3). Now as I have said before, a man cannot boast of faith-righteousness, for it is something that becomes his solely by the gracious kindness of God. To one who works and earns righteousness the recognition of his righteousness is due as a sort of just wages, and is no expression of gracious kindness (4). It is when one does not earn righteousness by accumulated deeds of obedience but simply in penitent faith commits himself to one who in forgiving love pronounces penitent wrong doers righteous, that such language is used as was used in Genesis to describe Abraham (5)."

1. **Abraham.** In parts of the Talmud Abraham stands out as a model of righteousness. He was the only righteous man of his day and was therefore chosen to be the father of the holy people to whom God planned later to entrust his law. (Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmud*, p. 255. Cf. Sanday). **Our forefather.** The objection is supposed to come from the synagogue or from the ultra-conservative Christian Jews, and Paul as a Jew of course classes himself with the objector. The expression does not imply that the readers of the letter were Jews. A Frenchman addressing an American audience might speak of French history as "our history." In that case in using the pronoun "we" he might mean either "we French" or "we who are present." **According to the flesh.** By physical, racial descent (cf. 1:3). Modifies "forefather" according to the punctuation in the margin, even if "has found" be not omitted as in some ancient authorities.

2. **By works.** See note on 3: 20. The principle involved in "works of law" might conceivably prevail even before the Mosaic law had been given. Furthermore Abraham according to the Talmud had really known by direct revelation what the law was going to be and so kept it himself and taught it to his descendants



3. For what saith the scripture? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness.
4. Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt.
5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness.

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(Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmud*, p. 255). **Not toward God.** See paraphrase.

3. **The Scripture.** Gen. 15:6. **Believed God.** Abraham is pictured as having a vision in which he stood before the face of God, talked with him, and was promised by God a multitude of descendants. His belief, or faith, consisted in yielding himself in trustful obedience to God who had made him the great promise, so that God called him "my friend" (Is. 41:8). Such direct relationship to himself satisfied God's desire for righteousness in Abraham. Paul holds that this believing in God on the part of righteous Abraham proves that believing in Jesus is the only way to righteousness now. He assumes that believing in Jesus is equivalent to believing in God. This is because Jesus is the present manifestation of God. God has "set him forth" 3:25; he is the "image of God" (Col. 1:15); God is in him (II Cor. 5:19).

4. **Reckoned.** "Recognized," as in 3:28, or "set down in an account book" (cf. 4:8). The argument does not rest on the use of the word "reckoned" in the Genesis passage, as if that word could not have been used if Abraham had possessed righteousness by works. Theoretically works could be "reckoned" righteousness as well as faith. The argument is rather that Abraham presented no works. He simply stood before the promising God in a spirit of friendly obedient trust, or faith, and God therefore recorded, or listed, him in his book of life as righteous. Levi "has been recorded on the heavenly tablets as a friend and a righteous man." (*Jubilees* 30:20).

5. **Worketh not.** An expression with a special, technical meaning. See note on 3:20. Paul never holds that the man of faith does no good deeds. In the ethical portions of all his epistles, even in Galatians which contains his fiercest polemic against works, he insists that faith must issue in kindly action. (Gal. 5:6, 19-24, 6:10).

6. Even as David also pronounceth blessing upon the man, unto whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works,
7. *saying*, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.
8. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin.

- (2) *David also a witness for righteousness by faith. The only blessedness that David recognizes is the blessedness of the forgiven man, that is, the man of faith, 4:6-8.*

"Even David, as well as Abraham, knew no other kind of righteousness than faith-righteousness. When he describes God's 'blessed man' he does not describe one who has earned God's approbation by flawless deeds (6). He describes one to whom God does not charge up sin, because he has been forgiven, that is, the man whose penitent faith has been pronounced righteousness (7-8)."

7. **Iniquities are forgiven.** From Ps. 32: 1-2. Paul evidently regards this expression as equivalent to, or at least as involving, the idea of faith righteousness. This was assumed in 3: 25-26.

- (3) *The Jew has no monopoly of faith righteousness. It is useless for the Jew to argue: "Even granted that faith-righteousness is the only kind of practicable righteousness Jews alone have a right to possess it," for Abraham's faith was pronounced righteousness before he became a Jew, while he was still, so to speak, a Gentile, 4: 9-12.*

"I know you will admit that if faith righteousness alone was possible for Jews as illustrious as Abraham and David certainly no more pretentious kind of righteousness will be possible for ordinary Jews. But I have often found the men of the synagogue maintaining that God will certainly wish to show his chosen people some special favor and therefore he will grant to them alone the privilege of having faith accounted righteousness. Only the circumcised man, they say, can enjoy this privilege. Let us look at Abraham's case again for light on this point since we have already recognized his case to be clearly one of faith righteousness (9). Was Abraham's faith accounted righteousness before or after he was circumcised? Before he was circumcised, while he was still, so to speak, a Gentile (10). His circumcision, far from being something necessarily antecedent to faith righteousness,



9. Is this blessing then pronounced upon the circumcision, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say, To Abraham his faith was reckoned for righteousness.
10. How then was it reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision:
11. and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had

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was really something that followed faith and served as a sign that faith had already been accepted as righteousness. It was like a seal stamped on a document to show that the contents of the document have already been examined by a competent authority and pronounced satisfactory. This peculiar proceeding was intended by God to make it evident that Abraham is a father of all uncircumcised men that have faith, so that they like their father may have faith accounted righteousness (11). The proceeding is intended by God also to show that Abraham is a father of such circumcised persons only as imitate the faith that he exercised before he was circumcised (12)."

9. **This blessing**, that is spoken of by David as belonging to the faith righteous man. **Upon the circumcision.** It is evident from Galatians and from Acts that there were Christian Jews who believed that only Jews had the privilege of becoming Christians. They reasoned that the Kingdom of God had been promised to the Jews and if any others wished to share in the promise they must of course join those to whom the promise had been made; they must be circumcised and so become Jews (cf. Acts 15: 1, 5). Such antagonists in many synagogues had doubtless called Paul's attention at this point in his staple argument to the fact that Abraham, David, and the readers of David's Psalms were all circumcised men! Paul's answer is that Abraham, the original type, was not a circumcised man when his faith was reckoned righteousness. His faith was reckoned righteousness in ch. 15 of Genesis while not until later, ch. 17, is the account of his circumcision found. This fact must have had great weight with those accustomed to the style of argument that prevailed in synagogue circles.

11. **The sign of circumcision.** Circumcision is called a "sign" in Gen. 17: 11. Circumcision instead of being something that

while he was in uncircumcision: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be reckoned unto them;

12. and the father of circumcision to them who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had in uncircumcision.

conferred advantage was simply a sign that advantage had already been conferred, namely, the advantage of having faith accounted righteousness. **A seal.** See paraphrase. **That he might be.** God purposely had his circumcision delayed until after he had been pronounced righteous by faith. **The father.** "A father:" a spiritual ancestor.

12. **The father of circumcision.** "A father of circumcision," that is, "a circumcised father."

- (4) *The Jew may no longer continue to anticipate having a monopoly of the earth. It is the faith-righteous men of all nations that are to possess the earth. God's promise of the earth to Abraham and his descendants was made in view of Abraham's faith-righteousness—not in view of his law-keeping—and the promise was so worded as to make it evident that God expected faith-righteous men of many nations to be included among those who, as Abraham's seed, would inherit the earth, 4: 13–22.*

"Another reason for obligatory attachment to the Mosaic law commonly alleged by the men of the synagogue disappears when we examine the righteousness of Abraham. They look forward eagerly to the day when the Jewish nation, if faithfully obedient to the law of Moses, will be made by God the supreme world power. But this promise of world supremacy for the seed of Abraham was not made to him in connection with any devotion of himself to the law, but in connection with that faith in God which God declared to be righteousness (13). If world supremacy really belongs to law-keeping Jews only, as the synagogue holds, then Abraham's faith accomplished nothing and the promise of world supremacy which God made to him in connection with his faith was meaningless (14)! In the nature of the case law cannot secure any such magnificent result for law simply incites the sinful disposition in men to express itself in open transgression and

13. For not through the law was the promise to Abraham or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world, but through the righteousness of faith.

so necessitates a thorough expression of God's wrath. Such open transgression does not occur where there is no definite law to transgress (15). Since law leads to wrath God conditioned his promise of world supremacy on faith, because he really wished to act not wrathfully, but with generous kindness and to base his promise on a condition that would make it possible to include a great multitude in its fulfillment, not men of the one nation that possessed the Mosaic law, but men of all nations who have faith. He wished to have Abraham the father of all of us faithful Christians whatever be our nationality (16). The very wording of the promise makes this clear. The promise reads: "A father of *many* nations have I made thee." It was God, making such a promise, before whose face Abraham stood in trustful confident faith, a God who gives life to the dead,—to these aged parents and to our Lord Jesus as well—and who speaks with conviction of things which to human eyes have no existence (17). Abraham standing before God hopefully believed that of which there seemed to be no hope, namely, that he was to become a father of many nations, as God assured him when he showed him the stars of heaven and told him his descendants should be as many (18). His faith was so strong that it was not shaken by consciousness of the childless old age of himself and his wife (19). Indeed, as he faced the promise of God the difficulty rather strengthened his faith and he glorified God by his bold trust (20) and confident conviction that God was able to do the difficult thing he had promised (21). And so, as I said before, this obedient confidence in God won from God the declaration of Abraham's righteousness (22)."

13. For. "We should not rely on law for" etc. **Heir of the world.** The Jews expected to be the sole proprietors of the earth. The Kingdom of God, which they conceived to be a kingdom of righteous law-keeping Jews under the rule of God's Messiah, would one day fill the earth. Such other nations as objected to this arrangement would be destroyed. Those that acquiesced in it might become full Jewish proselytes or be annexed to the Jewish world-kingdom in some tributary relationship. The 17th Psalm in the Psalms of Solomon, written in the first century B.C., gives such a picture, also Isaiah 60. There is no record

14. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect:
15. for the law worketh wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.
16. For this cause *it is* of faith, that *it may be* according to grace; to the end that the promise may

that the earth was distinctly promised to Abraham. The land in which he sojourned was promised to him (Gen. 12: 7, 13: 14-18, 15: 7-8, 17: 8, etc.). He was also promised seed numerous as the stars (Gen. 15: 5) or the dust of the earth (Gen. 13: 16) and it was said that he would be a blessing to all the earth (Gen. 12: 3). These promises, taken in connection with current ideas of the world-wide Kingdom of God, easily led to the common assumption that God had promised the earth to Abraham for his seed. The Jews thought that this messianic world dominion would be hastened **through law** keeping. "If Israel would only keep two Sabbaths as they ought to be kept the redemption would immediately come." (Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmud*, p. 334). Paul having established the fact that Abraham's righteousness consisted in faith, and not in obedience to the law, is now able to assert that God's promise of the earth had no connection with Abraham's law keeping. It was not "through law." **For.** Introduces another reason in addition to v. 13 for not relying upon law.

14. **Faith is made void.** If law keepers get the earth, the faith of the faith people brings no advantage. The promise of God which gave them the earth turns out to be worthless.

15. **For.** Still another objection to the attempt to get advantage through law: law simply stirs up the sinful disposition and results in overt transgression. Thorough-going sin which expresses itself in flagrantly disobedient action produces a *thorough development* of wrath. The verb in Greek is a compound emphasizing completeness. Paul does not say that there is no *sin* where there is no law. In the rush of his thought Paul makes allusions on the side, which raise questions that the modern reader would be glad to hear him discuss at length. Perhaps there were ideas current among the original readers that made these allusions entirely intelligible.

16. **For this cause.** The cause stated in v. 15, namely, that the law works wrath. **It is of faith.** The promise of the earth

be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

17. (as it is written, A father of many nations have I made thee) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that are not, as though they were.

is made to men of faith-righteousness, **that it may be possible** for God to act kindly and not be obliged to exhibit wrath as would be the case if men were shut up to law alone. **To the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed.** God who likes to act generously—**according to grace**—wishes the promise to include as many as possible and so conditions it upon faith, which anyone, whether a Jew brought up under the law or a Gentile, may have. The man of the synagogue might have replied that the whole Gentile world could become law-keeping Jewish proselytes and so as great a multitude could inherit the promise under law as through faith. In reply to this Paul says two things: (1) In the nature of the case the attempt at sheer law keeping will result only in disobedience and consequent wrath (v. 15). (2) The very wording of the promise shows that God did not propose to have all inheritors of the promise become Jews for he specifically describes them as consisting of **many nations** (v. 17, cf. Gen. 17: 5). 17. **Before him whom he believed.** The entire sentence seems awkwardly constructed. What interruptions Paul suffered while dictating we do not know. Neither do we know the limitations of his amanuensis! Some of the slips of his amanuensis may have escaped Paul's notice when he reviewed the work. "Him" is not in the Greek. The antecedent of the relative pronoun "whom" is virtually found in the "I" of the quotation that has just preceded, namely, God, "a God who gives life to the dead." The parenthesis introduced (R. V.) might be omitted. Paul sees Abraham standing face to face with God as the Genesis narrative represents: "The faith of Abraham who is the father of us all as it is written: 'Father of many nations have I made thee,' standing before whom (God) he (Abraham) believed—a God who makes the dead to live and calls the things that (to our vision) are not as things that (really) are." **Quickeneth the dead.** Cf. v. 19. All readers would instantly think also of the resurrection of Jesus. **Things that are not.** The unborn and apparently impossible descendants.

18. Who in hope believed against hope, to the end that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, So shall thy seed be.
19. And without being weakened in faith he considered his own body now as good as dead (he being about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb:
20. yea, looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God,
21. and being fully assured that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.
22. Wherefore also it was reckoned unto him for righteousness.

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18. **Believed against hope.** Or "beyond" what appeared possible. To the end that he might become. Or "believed in his becoming a father," that is, believed that he should become a father. (Cf. for grammatical construction Jn. 12: 36). **So shall thy seed be.** Many as the stars (Gen. 15: 5).

19. Some MSS. insert a negative before the verb without changing the sense: "Because he was not weak in faith he did *not* consider his own body."

20. **Giving glory to God.** Glorifying God by believing in his truthfulness and power.

22. This faith, or belief, which accepted God as what he represented himself to be and treated him accordingly won for Abraham God's declaration of his righteousness. It made everything right between God and Abraham.

- (5) *The significance of the record of Abraham's faith. The story of Abraham's faith righteousness was put on record in scripture to prove to us that we could all have the same kind of righteousness and no other, 4: 23-25.*

"The story of Abraham's faith being accounted righteousness was not put on record simply to keep Abraham in honorable remembrance (23) but to encourage us whose faith will be accounted righteousness when we have faith in the God who raised

23. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was reckoned unto him;
24. but for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,
25. who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification.

5. *The new race in the New Age. Faith righteous men may look forward with peaceful confidence to the salvation of the Coming Age, to the new humanity introduced by Jesus Christ, righteous and death-*

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our Lord Jesus from the dead, as he raised Isaac from the dead old age of his parents (24)—the Lord Jesus who was delivered to death because of our transgressions and was raised again to be the living object of our faith and so to make our faith righteousness possible (25)."

24. **Believe on him that raised Jesus.** Often Paul speaks of Jesus himself as the object of faith. (Gal. 2:16). Since Jesus is the revelation of God there is to Paul's mind no essential difference between believing in God and believing in Jesus. See note on 4:3.

25. **Who was delivered up for our trespasses.** Because of our trespasses. Suggests the LXX Is. 53:6 "And the Lord delivered him (the servant of Jehovah) for our sins." (Cf. also Is. 53:12). It was our sins that necessitated God's revelation of himself in the death of Christ whom he "set forth in blood" (3:25). If we had not sinned God would have had no such experience as that revealed by the death suffering of Jesus. **Raised for our justification.** To secure our being pronounced righteous. Since we are pronounced righteous in view of our commitment of ourselves in faith to Jesus Christ, if he had not been raised from the dead there could be no faith. It is only to a living Lord that men can commit themselves in faith. If Jesus at death had gone where other dead Jews go, and had stayed there, he would not be accessible to living men as an object of faith. God himself in that case would also be discredited as an object of faith for he had identified himself with Jesus. He had rested the whole messianic enterprise on Jesus.



*less through all its extent regardless of previous nationality, as the old humanity introduced by Adam was sinful and mortal in all its extent, Ch. 5.*

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- (1) *The love of God in Jesus Christ the sure ground of enthusiasm for the Coming Age. Such love of God for men as has secured our reconciliation through Jesus Christ's death we can joyfully depend on to do even more for us through Jesus Christ's resurrection life and to carry us on into the salvation of the Coming Age, 5: 1-11.*

"It is because we have been pronounced righteous in view of our faith, as I have been showing, that we look up to God with profound contentment in the daily life of fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (1), through whose activity also we were originally introduced into this place where we continually experience the beautiful kindness of God. We not only have present contentment but we are able thankfully to exult in the confident hope of sharing the pure and radiant life of God's heavenly world in the New Age (2). Not only do we exult in this prospect but we even exult in our many present hardships for they develop in us endurance; endurance wins for us God's approval, and when a man has won God's approval he has the right to cherish a great hope of what God will do for him in the future (3). He will never experience the chagrin of finding the radiant heavenly life for which he hoped withheld from him by God, because his hope rests on God's love for him, a present sense of which is poured through his very heart like a refreshing stream by the Holy Spirit whom God has given to be with us, a messenger from that heavenly spirit world of glory (5). The love of God on which his hope rests will certainly not fail, since it has already been put to the utmost test. When we were most unattractive, weak and wicked, God's own Christ died for us in the time appointed by God's careful providence (6). What love this was! It is almost impossible to think of any one being willing to die for a righteous man,—possibly you might find a man ready to die for his benefactor—but God has proved the greatness of his love for us by having his Christ die for us when we were neither righteous nor his benefactors, but outright hostile sinners (8)! Now surely, when we are no longer hostile sinners but have been pronounced righteous at the cost of the bloody death which told us of God's love, we shall appear more attractive to him; we shall certainly survive the judgment day and be introduced into the heavenly glory for which we have hoped (9). Or to put the thought in another way: if while we were hostile to God he reconciled us to himself by the loving

5. Being therefore justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;
2. through whom also we have had our access by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and let us rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
3. And not only so, but let us also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;
4. and patience, probation; and probation, hope:

death of his Son, how certain it is that he will not fail us after the reconciliation, and that he who did so much for us by death will be able to do still more by his resurrection life (10). And we are not barely saved or reconciled, simply let off from punishment, but we are able to worship God with enthusiastic jubilation in the daily approach to him which is possible because of our fellowship with Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom, as I must keep saying in grateful repetition, we were reconciled by God to himself (11)."

1. **Therefore.** Gathers up the whole argument from 3:21 on, but refers particularly to the word justification in the summary statement just made (4:25). **Let us have.** There is better manuscript authority for "Let us have," than for "we have": but the two Greek letters involved in the change are so often interchanged that manuscript authority does not count as heavily in this case as usual. (See Denney, *E. G. T.*). "We have" fits the thought of the context rather better. **Through our Lord Jesus Christ.** This might refer to what our Lord did for us by his bloody death but since v. 2 seems to refer to that as a new thought, reference is probably made in v. 1 to our daily faith-fellowship with Jesus Christ in which we find a deeply contented outlook toward God.

2. **We have had.** Greek perfect tense "Had and still hold." **Access, or introduction.** **Into this grace**—into this continuous experience of God's beautiful gladdening kindness expressed in many ways but especially, in this connection, his forgiveness. **The glory of God.** See note on 2:7. **Rejoice.** Better, marginal reading "glory," adds the idea of active expectation to the tranquility expressed in v. 1.

3. **Tribulations—patience.** The word tribulation was some thing more to Paul than an expression of stereotyped religious phraseology! Cf. II Cor. 11:23-29. He found in himself a growing fixity of purpose.

5. and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost which was given unto us.
6. For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly.
7. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: for peradventure for the good man some one would even dare to die.
8. But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
9. Much more then, being now justified by his blood,

5. **The love of God.** God's love for us (cf. v. 8). **Shed abroad.** Poured out. Cf. Is. 44: 3. **The Holy Spirit.** Mentioned here for the first time in Romans. See note on 8: 9. The reason for mentioning the Holy Spirit in this connection is the fact that his presence is the first instalment and pledge of that life in the spirit world, that "glory of God" (v. 2), to which we so confidently look forward (cf. 8: 23).

6. **Weak.** Morally weak, under the dominance of the "flesh" which Paul will discuss in chs. 7-8. **Due season.** At the proper juncture in the great drama of humanity which Paul will picture in vs. 12-21 (cf. Gal. 4: 4).

7. **The good man.** Better "the benefactor" (cf. Matt. 20: 15), that is, his benefactor.

8. **God commendeth his own love—Christ died for us.** Christ's death was an expression of the love of God. Jesus' distress of soul over sin, which was the dominant element in his mortal suffering and which sprang from his love for men, was an expression of God's feeling toward his sinning children. The most fundamental and vital thing that a father can do to lead a son whom he loves to abandon sin, is to show him his own feeling about the hated sin. This God did when we were not "righteous" and much less his "benefactors," but plain "sinners"—the word by which the Jew in contempt described the abhorrent Gentile world (Gal. 2: 15). God loved "sinners!"

9. **Justified by his blood.** Pronounced righteous in, or by means of, his blood. The love of God which expressed itself in the bloody death of Jesus (v. 8) was what brought us to God in faith and so resulted in the reconciliation, the acquittal, or pro-

shall we be saved from the wrath of God through him.

10. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life;  
 11. and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

nouncement of righteousness. **Shall we be saved** in the messianic judgment and guaranteed glorious existence in the New Age, the "glory of God" for which we hope (v. 2). **The wrath**—somewhat technical term for the judgment.

10. Twofold reason for confident hope: more can be done for friends than for enemies, and more by life than by death. **Enemies.** The Greek word may mean either "disliked by" (cf. 11:28) or "disliking." It is not important to decide between the two meanings. Men disliked God and as a consequence God's disapproval rested upon them though he always loved them (v. 8). **We were reconciled.** Men are reconciled (cf. II Cor. 5:18, 19, 20; Col. 1:20, 21; Eph. 2:16). But Paul teaches that in the process of reconciliation man in faith lays aside his disobedient dislike of God, and God's righteous loving (v. 8) disapproval becomes a loving approval, so that both men and God act in the process. **His life.** His present resurrection life in glory and power, not the life he lived before his death.

11. **Not only so but we also rejoice.** We are not barely reconciled, and let off from expectation of punishment in the messianic judgment, but we find ourselves in a present relationship to God that fills us with exultation. **Through our Lord Jesus Christ.** It is through, that is in fellowship with, our Lord Jesus Christ that we bring our exultant worship to God. Cf. note on 1:8. **Through whom—the reconciliation.** It was what God did through Jesus' death that secured the reconciliation. See note on v. 10.

- (2) *The old race of Adam and the new race of Jesus Christ. Just as the one individual, Adam, through his sin introduced a race sinful and death-smitten in all its parts Jewish as well as Gentile, so the one individual, Jesus Christ, through his obedient life and death introduces a race righteous and immortal in all its parts, 5: 12-21.*

"We have pictured the whole human race in sin and in its midst Jesus Christ set forth by God to bring a believing race of recon-

ciled men into the glorious life of the New Age. Stop to note with reverent joy a wonderful parallel and its revelation of the grace of God. As through one man, Adam, sin broke into the world, brought with it death and so death became the fate of all men, since Adam's sin of course involved the subsequent sinning of all his descendants (12),—I say *all* his descendants, even those who lived before the time of Moses and his law, a period in which you might perhaps not expect to find sin, since sins cannot well be charged up against a man in the great book when there are no specific commandments to disobey (13). Yet even in this period, we know that all the sons of Adam sinned, because they all experienced death, the consequence of sin—even though they did not sin against a specific commandment of God as did Adam in the garden—Adam who, in his origination of a race, was, as I started to say, a prototype of the Christ who in due time was also to found a race (14). But these two race-founders were very unlike. The privilege of having faith accounted righteousness, which is God's gift to us in Christ Jesus, is certainly very unlike Adam's fateful trespass in the garden. In God's world you would expect to find the forces of good working more fruitfully than the forces of evil. It has been even so in this case. Because of that trespass of the one man the whole multitude of his descendants died; but the loving kindness of the one man, Jesus Christ, and the privilege of having faith accounted righteousness, which was God's gracious gift brought to us by his loving kindness, is experienced in divine abundance by the whole multitude of the new race that will call him Lord (15). In another point too, the divine gift through the one man, Christ, brought consequences utterly unlike those that followed the one man's sinning. A sentence of doom followed the one man's sinning, but, in the other case, although there had been many trespasses, forgiveness came as a free gift through the one man (16). This gives us our great hope, for if as a result of one man's trespass a reign of death was inaugurated, much more may those who have experienced God's beautiful abounding kindness in the free gift of forgiveness to the men of faith confidently expect a reign of life in which they themselves shall be rulers, as a result of what has been done for them by the one, Jesus Christ (17). So then, as I began to say above, just as through one trespass in the garden there came for all men an era of condemnation to death, so through one righteous act of obedience on the cross there came to all men an era of forgiving acquittal that brings life (18). For as one man's disobedience resulted in the whole multitude of men becoming sinners, so one man's obedience will produce a righteous humanity in the New Age (19). Into this situation in which all men were sinning the Mosaic law came incidentally as an additional factor, not to cure

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12. Therefore, as through one man sin entered into

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the calamitous situation, as the synagogue holds, but on the contrary to make the sinful disposition express itself in more abundant overt acts of transgression. However, this was not meant to be victory for Sin, because where man's sin abounded God's loving kindness super-abounded, where sin rose high, God's love rose higher (20), in order that just as Sin had exercised a universal dominion that produced a death-smitten humanity, so love might exercise a universal dominion that produces such faith-righteousness as leads to endless life in the New Age, an everlasting dominion established by Jesus Christ our Lord (21)."

12. **Therefore.** Connects the following paragraph with the preceding. Vs. 1-11 have been filled with the exultant hope of the New Age and its salvation, cherished by those whose faith in Jesus Christ has brought them God's righteousness. Out of this springs the second paragraph (vs. 12-21) which has been called "Paul's hymn of praise to Jesus Christ." It is a Christian rabbi's hymn with rabbinic emphasis of Adam, Moses, the Law and the Two Ages. It contrasts the present age of flesh, sin and death, dominated by its founder, the sinful Adam, and the Coming Age of spirit, righteousness and eternal life, dominated by its righteous founder, Jesus Christ. It should be recognized that Paul's view of Adam has no vital connection with the fundamental features of his religious thought. His fundamental position is that all men are sinners and that there is a way of escape from sin in Jesus Christ. His theory regarding the way in which it came to pass that all men sin is logically a wholly minor matter. **As.** The comparison begins as if it were to be a statement of similarity, but the only point of similarity turns out to be the fact that in each case it is one individual whose action produces momentous consequences. The contrast is between the different character of the actions and the consequences in each case. Grammatically, the structure of the paragraph is broken. The first member of the comparison introduced by "as" (v. 12) is not followed by any second member introduced by the correlative "so." Instead a parenthetical explanation of a certain point is introduced (vs. 13-14). The last clause of v. 14 shows what the second member of the comparison was to have been, and then in vs. 15-17 certain points of contrast are stated. V. 18<sup>a</sup> takes up again the comparison that was dropped in v. 13, restates the first member as it was presented in v. 12, and at once in v. 18<sup>b</sup> gives the second member. V. 19 repeats the comparison in another form and vs. 20-21 conclude with the picture of the abounding grace of God reigning forevermore in righteousness over the new humanity



the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned:—

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Through one man sin entered into the world.** Paul has in mind the story found in Gen. 3, and the frequent discussions of it in the rabbinical schools where he received his religious education. **And so death passed unto all men.** The death of all men is attributed by Paul to the sin of Adam. That his use of the word includes physical death is evident from v. 14, but the meaning of the word is not limited to physical death. See note on 8:6. **For that all sinned.** This might mean that each man sinned for himself when his turn to live came; or it might mean that the act of Adam so involved all of his descendants that they all sinned in his sin. That such reasoning was possible, in certain circles, at least, is evident from Heb. 7:9-10. The fact that Paul speaks of all men as dying in Adam (I Cor. 15:22) indicates that he means here to say that all men in some sense sinned in Adam's sin. The whole race to be was there. If this is what he means here, he also held that all men also sinned each for himself in his own lifetime, for this has been the argument of 1:18-3:20. This same double view appears elsewhere in first century Jewish literature.

"For though Adam first sinned and brought untimely death upon all, yet of those who were born from him each one of them has prepared for his own soul torment to come, and again each one of them has chosen for himself glories to come." "Adam is, therefore, not the cause save only of his own soul, but each of us has been the Adam of his own soul." (*Apoc. Baruch*, 54:15, 19). "O thou Adam, what hast thou done! For though it was thou that sinned, the fall was not thine alone, but ours also, who are thy descendants! For how does it profit us that the eternal age is promised to us, whereas we have done the works that bring death?" (4 Esdras 7:118-119). The Talmud in some places seems to teach that Adam's sin did not necessitate the death of all his descendants. His sin introduced death into the world, but death has power over any given individual simply because of that individual's sin. There have been nine (among them Pharaoh's daughter who rescued Moses) who as a matter of fact were not sinners and did not die (Weber, pp. 238-242. Cf. also Schechter, *Some aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, p. 188). Whatever may have been Paul's idea about the way in which Adam's sin operates to make all his descendants sin and die, his main concern here is simply to assert that a race sinful and death-smitten in all its extent flowed out from Adam.



13. For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.
14. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come.
15. But not as the trespass, so also *is* the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many.

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13-14. **For.** Introduces proof that sin has been universal. This proof is found in the fact that sin existed even in the period between Adam and Moses when, since there was no Mosaic "law" to sin against, it might be supposed that there could be no sin. We know, however, that there was sin even then, because it is a historic fact that in this period every one died. **Sin is not imputed.** "Charged to his account." (Cf. Philem. 18). If the books were being carefully kept by God as the Talmud represents, it would be difficult to enter a "charge" of sin, because where there was no law no commandment could be specified as broken. This does not mean that there is no sin, for the preceding clause says that there is. It seems to mean that God does not regard sin as so heinous when it does not break out into the open rebellion possible only when there is a definite law against which to rebel. (Cf. 4: 15). **The likeness of Adam's transgression.** They had no explicit commandment like that given by God to Adam in the garden. **A figure of him that was to come.** This is the first indication of the fact that the comparison is to be between Adam and Christ. Adam was the "figure" of Christ in that Christ also was to be the founder of a new race, the introducer of the New Age.

15. **The free gift.** The privilege of having faith accounted righteousness with all the consequences that this involves. **The many died.** Not "many" but "*the* many"; the great multitude, the whole race. Paul does not mean that all men will be saved, for he elsewhere speaks of the destruction that awaits the disobedient (II Thess. 1: 8-9, Phil. 3: 18-19). He means that Jesus Christ will establish a new, wholly righteous race. **Much more.**

16. And not as through one that sinned, *so* is the gift: for the judgement *came* of one unto condemnation, but the free gift *came* of many trespasses unto justification.
17. For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, *even* Jesus Christ.
18. So then as through one trespass *the judgement came* unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness *the free gift came* unto all men to justification of life.
19. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous.
20. And the law came in beside, that the trespass

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Because God delights in showing mercy more than in punishing sin.

17. **Gift of righteousness.** The privilege of having faith accounted righteousness is a gift. **Reign in life.** The faith-righteous will be rulers in an empire characterized by invincible life (cf. 8: 17, 29; I Cor. 6: 2; II Tim. 2: 12).

18. Formally resumes the interrupted comparison begun in v. 12. **One act of righteousness.** Jesus Christ's obedience even unto death (cf. Phil. 2: 8). **Justification of life.** A declaration of righteousness, an acquittal, that results in life.

19. **The many.** All, the whole race. **Were made sinners,** not without the inexcusable action of their own wills (1: 20 ff. 2: 1 ff). They were constituted sinners in the sense that Adam's sin resulted in a sinning race. Christ's righteousness will result in a righteous race.

20. **The law came in beside.** In addition to the natural effect of Adam's sin and as a subordinate "side issue," not in the supreme place assigned to it by the synagogue. **That the trespass might**

might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly:

21. that, as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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**abound**; that the sinful disposition of Adam's descendants might break out abundantly in overt transgression. This view would naturally horrify the synagogue which regarded the law as a means by which men might accumulate righteousness. **Grace did abound.** Apparently sin was to be made abundant and so the power of Sin to dominate man more pronounced, in order that God's loving kindness might more effectively deal with it. When a disease lurking in the system reveals its presence by unmistakable symptoms it can be more effectively treated: when the enemy is drawn out of ambush he can be fought and conquered.

21. **So might grace reign.** Paul's optimism appears in his view of the final result of Jesus Christ's activity. "Mercy upon all" is his final word, (11:32).

II. FAITH—RIGHTEOUS MEN AND SIN (CHS. 6-8). MEN WHO HAVE STARTED IN GOD'S WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS BY BELIEVING IN JESUS CHRIST HAVE BEEN ALREADY LAID HOLD OF BY THE POWERS OF THE COMING SPIRIT AGE AND MUST, THEREFORE, SURELY BREAK WITH SIN WHICH REIGNS IN THIS AGE OF FLESH (CH. 6) THEY MUST ATTAIN TO THE IDEAL THAT THE HOLY LAW OF MOSES HELD UP BUT COULD NEVER ENFORCE (CH. 7). THIS VICTORIOUS ALLIANCE WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD GUARANTEES THEM A GLORIOUS LIFE WITH CHRIST IN THE COMING SPIRIT AGE (CH. 8).

- I. *The faith-righteous man cannot continue in sin so as to enjoy more of God's forgiving love. See to it, therefore, that you do not yield to the attacks of Sin which we men in the border land of the flesh and spirit worlds still continue to experience (12-14), 6: 1-14.*

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"What, then, shall we conclude from the startling fact that God provided for such special development of sin as gave him opportunity to show the superior strength of his up-welling grace (5: 20)? I am pained to discover that in these last years many Gentile Christians find in this fact reason for supposing that they please God by letting their flesh bodies proceed to any extreme of sin in this age of flesh, so soon to be ended by the Wrath, in order that he may show his marvelous kindness by nevertheless assur-

ing to their spirits a place in the New Age of spirit. Let no one for a moment find ground in my gospel for such an abhorrent inference. We have been separated from the life of sin by nothing less than a death. How can a person continue to live in a sphere out of which he has died? (2) Have you not realized that when in baptism we committed ourselves to the leadership of Jesus Christ, he led us through a death, and that we followed him through his death out into the spiritual world where men do not sin? (3). This was the very symbolism of our baptism. Submergence in the baptismal waters was for us death and burial like his, experienced in order that we might emerge into a daily life of new ethical purity, just as Christ rose from the dead in the glorious spirit form of his Father's sinless heavenly world. (4). For if we have grown into him so as to be like him in point of death, so certainly shall we be like him in the point of resurrection. (5). We surely know that the man we used to be, the man of the old sinful flesh age so soon to give place to the New Age of spirit, was crucified with Christ, so that the body which used willingly to be the slave of Sin might be made utterly inoperative. The very purpose of this was that our bondage to Sin should cease (6). For he who has died out of Sin's realm has been absolved from all Sin's claim upon him. We cannot say, as some do, that lustful desire itself is evidence of the rightful claim of Sin upon the flesh body (7). Now if we died with Christ, as we have said, we believe that we shall have a permanent continuous life with him never to be destroyed by Sin (8). For we know that the risen Christ will not die again (9). The death that he died in Sin's realm will never be repeated. He will never enter it in the flesh again. The life which he now lives is in God's realm, and he will never put off his spirit form again (10). Since he looks forward to no more connection with Sin's realm, so do you count yourselves to be out of all connection with it—dead to its appeal, but alert to God in your faith-fellowship with Christ Jesus in the spirit world (11). Do not let Sin reign in the death-smitten body, which you still for a short while inhabit and which would still like to have its lusts gratified (12). Do not present your bodily members to Sin, to be used as tools with which to work unrighteousness. But present yourselves to God as if the resurrection were already past, as it is potentially and soon will be in fact. Yield your members to God as tools to be used in working out righteousness (13). This you are now amply able to do for Sin has lost its power to dominate you. You are not under a law which can merely hold up a high ideal and demand its realization. If you were you would be helpless. But you are living in the sphere of God's grace, in which Jesus Christ has allied himself with your spirits and given them power to realize every high ideal (14)."

6. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?
2. God forbid. We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?
3. Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?
4. We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised

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1. Paul begins here to protest against a view that some Gentile Christians found it easy to adopt, namely, that the Christian could sin with impunity. Paul's experience with the Corinthian church during the last few years had already revealed this danger to him. There had been gross immorality on the part of individuals, and the undeveloped conscience of the church had been scandalously slack in its condemnation (cf. I Cor. 5: 1-8, 13; 6: 9-20.). This anemic moral sense might have sprung from several causes. The current idea that flesh and spirit belonged to separate, or even antagonistic, worlds (cf. I Cor. 15: 50; Gal. 5: 17), might easily lead to the idea that nothing done in the flesh could affect the spirit. The way in which Paul deals with the matter here shows that his teaching had been cited by licentious Gentile Christians as giving logical warrant for this view. These dangers in Paul's gospel had doubtless often been urged by men of the synagogue as fundamental objections to the legitimacy of his gospel, and they had gloated over the confirmation of their charges afforded by the immorality of Paul's Gentile converts.

2. **We who died to sin.** Paul is describing the complete break with Sin that has occurred in the faith-righteous man's life. He describes this break by the word death, because underlying the idea of two ages, which he had just been discussing (5: 12-21), is the idea of two worlds already in existence—a flesh world where sin prevails and a spirit world of righteousness—and death is the natural exit from the flesh world.

3. **Baptized into Christ Jesus, or unto Christ Jesus** (cf. I Cor. 10: 2), that is, to become his possession, which involves the intimate purifying personal union of the faith relationship.

4. **Baptized into his death**—so that we pass through a spiritual experience like that which he passed through in death. We have not literally died out of the flesh world, and put off our mortal bodies (v. 12), but something in some measure equivalent to such a death has happened to us through our connection with Christ Jesus. We have in some way and in some sense shared his dying

from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

out of the flesh world. Furthermore this dying is connected with baptism. Baptism is not only death but even a kind of burial, which would indicate, although perhaps not necessarily, that baptism was submergence in water. Baptism seems to be not only death and burial by submergence, but resurrection by emergence. Christ emerged from the grave not **through the glory of the Father** but *in* the glory of the Father (same use of the preposition in 4: 11), that is, in the possession of a glorious spirit body, God-given and heavenly in its nature (cf. II Cor. 4: 17; 5: 1-2). So we emerge from baptismal death and burial into new life. The general outline of Paul's picture is clear: Into this flesh world dominated by Sin and Death comes Jesus. Here he dies, but through death and resurrection passes into the spirit world full of the glory of God, where Sin and Death touch no one. The man who in faith takes Jesus as his Lord is thereby inseparably connected with the personality of Jesus. His spirit is already with Jesus' spirit in the spirit world (Col. 3: 1). His body to be sure is still below, death-smitten in Death's flesh world, but is certain to give place to a deathless spirit body (8: 10-11; I Cor. 15: 44, 50), like that of Jesus (8: 29).

Paul's conception of the function of baptism in this process is not so clear. Did he think that in the act of baptism some physical change took place which started the new spirit body, or which in some other way gave the personality a footing in the spirit world? Against this is the fact that, according to the Book of Acts, his own great experience with Jesus preceded his baptism, and that in I Cor. 1: 14-17 he speaks in a somewhat depreciatory tone of baptism, although in a way which indicates that it was customary to place large emphasis upon it (I Cor. 1: 15). Furthermore, the reception of the spirit body seems in Paul to be a sudden experience not connected with baptism, to which all believers look forward (8: 23; II Cor. 5: 1-2; Phil. 3: 20-21). On the other hand Paul's language here is very suggestive of some of the mystery religion rites, in which the initiate by going symbolically through the same experiences that his deity was supposed to have actually passed through, was thought to enter into fellowship with this deity, and to secure a share in the deity's eternal life. It is coming to seem more and more probable that the mystery religions constituted a part of the environment of Pauline Christianity. Apuleius, who lived in the next century, gives a description of the initiation near Corinth of a certain Lucius into the mysteries of Isis worship. His picture of the curious crowd that



5. For if we have become united with *him* by the likeness of his death, we shall be also *by the likeness* of his resurrection;
6. knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be done away,

gathered around Lucius, both before and after initiation, shows that the influence of the mystery religions extended, not only to the initiates, but also to the multitude of their uninitiated acquaintances. Many of those who presented themselves for the initiatory Christian rite of baptism may have previously been initiated into some of the mystery religions, or at least have shared the popular attitude toward their initiatory rites. Such persons, in view of what they had learned of the life and character of Jesus Christ, would come to the solemn ceremony of Christian baptism with expectation of some great change far surpassing that which they had attributed in imagination to the mystery rites. The psychological result of such expectation would in many cases have been remarkable emotional upheaval, which would have been interpreted by the Christian initiates in accordance with the presuppositions of their thought. Even if Paul himself did not see in these baptismal experiences of his believing converts evidence of some actual physical change, produced by the Spirit of God through baptism, he would still have regarded baptism as a very wonderful experience that might properly be described in terms that would make its profound significance intelligible to those who had current ideas regarding what was to be expected from initiatory rites. The great fact to Paul's mind was the wonderful transforming power of spiritual contact through faith with the personality of Jesus Christ, and it might not seem strange to him that, as the believing disciple repeated in baptismal symbolism the death and resurrection experiences of his Lord, the personality of Jesus should make its presence felt in some wonderful way in the very constitution of the disciple's inner being.

**5. United with.** The word is one that appears in the vocabulary of the mystery religions. **Shall be.** Evidently a part of the experience symbolized by baptism, the assumption of the resurrection body, is yet in the future.

**6. Our old man.** Our old time man who belonged to Sin's age. Called "old" because in Jewish thought the coming Messianic Age is considered "new" and everything in the present age is "old" (cf. Rev. 21: 1; Mk. 14: 25; II Cor. 5: 17-18). **Body of sin.** The kind of body possessed by all who live in the present

- that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin;
7. for he that hath died is justified from sin.
  8. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him;
  9. knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death no more hath dominion over him.
  10. For the death that he died, he died unto sin once: but the life that he liveth, he liveth unto God.
  11. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead

age of Sin, a kind of body that easily lends itself to Sin's uses. "Sin" seems to be a distinct personal power. Paul conceived the life of man to be surrounded by evil personal intelligences (Eph. 6: 11-12). Therefore it was natural for him to see back of any particular evil condition some malign intelligence. See Introduction p. 3. **Done away.** Ultimately done away, when the resurrection body will be assumed, and until then its power of present domination done away (cf. vs. 12-14).

7. **Justified from sin.** Acquitted or "released" (marginal reading) from Sin. Gives the reason for the last clause in v. 6. The natural appetite was perhaps considered an evidence that Sin had a claim upon the flesh body (cf. 1 Cor. 6: 12-13).

8. **We shall also live,** When we receive our resurrection bodies. We *have* died and we *shall* also live, but where are we in the meantime? Paul's figure seems to fail here. He pushes on under the impulse of his great main idea careless as to what becomes of his figure, dropping it and picking it up again as will best serve his purpose for the moment. His main idea is clear: a great moral re-enforcement has come to us in the personal union of our spirits with the Spirit of the resurrected Christ. This guarantees us future resurrection bodies like Christ's and present power over the flesh bodies we still possess.

9. The life will be an endless life like Christ's; we pass out from the domain of Sin and Death forever.

10. **Died unto sin once.** An experience never to be repeated. Christ will never again assume a flesh body and so take his place again in Sin's realm. **He liveth unto God**—in the spirit world of God and deathless glory.

11-14. Direct exhortation addressed to the Gentile Christians who constitute at least the large majority of his readers, and who

- unto sin, but alive unto God, in Christ Jesus.
12. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof:
  13. neither present your members unto sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God.
  14. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace.

2. *The fact that the faith-righteous men have passed out of the sphere where Sin reigns and law punishes into the sphere of God's forgiving love necessarily involves enslavement to God's righteousness. We may think of ourselves under the figure of a slave who changed masters. We broke away from our*

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are in great danger of thinking that it makes little difference what they do with their flesh bodies in the brief interval before they dispense with them altogether and enter fully upon the life of the spirit Age.

11. **Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin.** Paul contends with utmost earnestness that in this border-land period they are not to be subject in any part of their being to the dominance of the dark land of evil from which they are emerging, but to be wholly subject to the power of the realm for which they have started.

**In Christ Jesus.** The fellowship of their spirits with the Spirit of Christ makes it feasible to do this.

14. **Not under law but under grace.** The reason why Sin cannot longer "lord it" over them is the fact that they are not left with nothing but a written law in their hands or a conscience law in their hearts (cf. 2: 15), a bare ideal of duty with threats and promises attached. If they were they would be helpless. But God's grace, his beautiful kindness, has drawn near them in the personal form of Jesus Christ, and in alliance with him they can realize the ideal presented to them in the law.

*sad bondage to Sin and the penalty pronounced by law, and came into glad bondage to God's righteousness (6: 15-23). Or we may use the figure of the woman who changed husbands. When her first husband died she married another. When our connection with the control of the law ceased we instantly came under the control of Christ. (7: 1-6). 6: 15-7: 6*

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"Neither must you in Rome believe,—as some other Gentile Christians, to my shame, have been glad to believe—that since, according to my gospel, we are not left to wrestle with law, its high ideal and certain penalty, but have to do instead with the forgiving grace of God in Christ Jesus, we may without fear let our bodily lusts be gratified. Let no one quote any statement of mine as authority for such a conclusion (15). Think of the situation under the analogy of the relation between slave and master. You are the slave of the power you propose to obey, and in this case, that power must be either Sin or God. But to be mastered by the spirit of obedience to God means righteousness which of course yields life (16). Thank God that you, who used to be slaves to Sin, heartily subjected yourselves to the Lordship of Jesus as it is presented in the form of teaching whose control over you was secured by faithful preachers (17). This freed you from Sin's mastery and enabled you to become slaves of righteousness (18). I use this inadequate illustration, taken from the relationships of this present age of flesh, because your connection with the flesh weakens your direct perception of the facts of spiritual experience. The gist of the matter is this: you used to yield your bodily organs to the service of licentiousness and other forms of wickedness with the result that you lived wicked lives; now yield these bodily organs to the service of righteousness that the result may be lives set sacredly apart to God's pure uses (19). It is true that when you were slaves of Sin you were free men so far as the control of righteousness was concerned (20). But then, of what advantage was your freedom? It was simply freedom to wallow in the deadly things you now blush to remember (21)! But now that you are freed from the vile slavery to Sin and have become God's bondslaves, you experience the unspeakable advantage of power to live a pure life that leads to the endless liberty of the Coming Age (22). The man who is Sin's slave gets personal ruin meted out to him as the wages he so thoroughly earns!

15. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid.

God's bondsman receives as a generous and undeserved free gift, the endless life of the Coming Age, through his connection with Christ Jesus our Lord (23).

Let me illustrate in another way the fact that the person who is no longer subject to the law must not therefore feel free to sin. I am writing to you men of Rome, the center of the empire's laws, who know law well. You understand that the law rules a man only so long as he lives. The law does not follow a dead man (1). As illustration of this take a matter pertinent to our present discussion. The law binds a married woman to her husband as long as he lives. If the husband die and the marriage relation be broken up, she is free from connection with the husband law (2). By the terms of this law she will be called an adulteress if she marry another man while her husband lives, but if her husband die she may marry another. The death of a party to the marriage contract dissolves the contract, breaks up connection with the law which sustained the contract, and leaves the way open to form another relationship (3). And so, my brothers, you may think of yourselves as having died out of all relation to the law, when Christ's body died and passed out of the law's flesh age, and as having been left free to enter into another relationship, namely, a relationship with Christ, who meets you on the other side of death, because himself raised from the dead. It is God's purpose that the product of this new relationship shall be something that will please him (4). This certainly has not hitherto been the case. Before you died, when you were living in the sphere of the flesh with all its evil inclinations, all sorts of sinful lusts, stirred up to perverse exercise by the law, expressed themselves in your bodily organs in such a way as to produce results suited not to God but to ruinous death (5). But now we have been freed from the law which, before we died to it, used to hold us in bondage and keep us from forming an alliance with any other. We are left free to ally ourselves with Christ, a *person*, and to serve him in that high development of our spiritual nature which characterizes that New Age of spirit; we are not in connection any longer with a mere *document*, the written law, which belongs with the old age of flesh."

15. **Shall we sin?** The fundamental difficulty is the same that appeared in the last paragraph, but Paul wishes to discuss it in every form in which he has found it appearing, so that it may be utterly rooted out of the minds of all Gentile Christians. This paragraph is hortatory and not apologetic. **Not under law.** The

16. Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves *as* servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?
17. But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered;
18. and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness.
19. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye presented your members *as* servants to uncleanness and to in-

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fact that they were not expected to obey the details of the Mosaic law as did the Jews, led them to feel superior to all the moral obligations presented in the law. They stood in such favor with God, that they could, without fear of defilement or punishment, indulge all the bodily appetites, especially the sexual appetite (I Cor. 5-6)!

16. **Servants . . . of sin unto death.** To give life up to Sin is to be the slave of Sin, and necessarily results in death. What death is he will make more evident in ch. 8. He assumes here that an act is not sinful simply because the law forbids it, so that being out from under law would make it possible to do the forbidden thing with impunity. The act is in itself wrong. To practise it is to be in bondage to Sin, and this leads inevitably to death.

17. **Obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered.** They had been "delivered," brought into voluntary captivity, to a certain form of teaching—carrying out the figure of slave and master. This "form of teaching" presented Jesus as Lord (cf. 10:8-9). In faith they accepted him as Lord, and his Lordship in their lives necessarily involved the discontinuance of bondage to Sin.

19. **I speak after the manner of men.** An apology for using imperfect analogies from life in the present flesh age to illustrate truths of the spirit world, a procedure made necessary by the weakness of their spiritual perceptions resulting from the undue



- iquity unto iniquity, even so now present your members *as* servants to righteousness unto sanctification.
20. For when ye were servants of sin, ye were free in regard of righteousness.
21. What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.
22. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life.
23. For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
7. Or are ye ignorant, brethren (for I speak to men that know the law), how that the law hath dominion over a man for so long time as he liveth?

influence of the flesh age over them. **Uncleanness.** Usually sexual immorality. **Sanctification,** holiness; in general, the characteristic of one set sacredly apart to God's uses in human society, and here particularly contrasted with licentious uncleanness.

20. **Free in regard of righteousness.** The principle of righteousness, enforced in the soul by the Lordship of Jesus, had then no power over them.

21. **Fruit, advantage, profit. Death.** See 8:6.

22. **Fruit unto sanctification.** The life of glad enslavement to God, as they accept in faith the Lordship of Jesus, results immediately in purity of life and ultimately in the endless life of the future messianic kingdom.

23. **The wages of sin is death.** The slave master is perhaps ironically said to pay wages—but a wage that consists in death! Or perhaps the contrast is between wages, as what men deserve, and the undeserved gift of life in the messianic age which the Lord of the Age to come brings them.

7:1. A second illustration, one taken from married life, is used to show that the man who has ceased to rely for righteousness upon law, whether the Mosaic law or its equivalent written in the heart, cannot feel free to sin. The figure cannot be applied in



2. For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she is discharged from the law of the husband.
3. So then if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the husband die, she is free from the law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be joined to another man.
4. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye

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detail for it breaks down at two points. In the actual experience discussed by Paul the one who dies to the law forms the new relationship with Christ, whereas in the illustration the one who does not die marries again. Furthermore, the figure seems to require that the one who dies to the law meet Jesus Christ beyond death and there be united to him, whereas in ch. 6, and here in v. 4, he seems to be united with Christ before and in death. Paul seems also in his figure to waver between the husband and the husband law as that with which the woman's relation is broken by her husband's death. However, the main fact is clear enough, namely, that as the marriage relation established by law is broken up by the death of one party, and the survivor, no longer subject to the dead partner through the marriage law, is left free to marry another, so the relation to the Mosaic law is broken up by the death of its subject, and the resurrected subject is left free to form a new relationship with Jesus Christ. The outstanding fact is that he does form this relation. He is not left unrelated and unrestrained, and this new relation to Christ is one that makes the dominance of Sin an impossibility. **Men who know the law.** Omit "the." People who live in Rome, the center from which law goes forth to all the world, are men who know law, and who will realize that law does not have jurisdiction over a dead man.

2. **The law of the husband.** The husband law, the law regulating the relation of husbands and wives, no longer applies to her.

4. **Made dead to the law through the body of Christ.** The death of Christ's flesh body is regarded as being the death of the believer's flesh body, a death which takes him out of the flesh world which is the sphere in which the law operates. How could

should be joined to another, *even* to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God.

5. For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.
  6. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were holden; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.
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the death of Christ's body be the death of the believer's body? Here is a point where it is difficult to follow Paul. He seems to feel that Christ's passing out of the flesh world and up into the victorious spirit world through death and resurrection, creates an opening through which any who in faith would follow him as Lord may come after him. If this be his thought, it rests upon a dualistic view which sees the world of flesh and the world of spirit as absolutely separate spheres. The death they experience is in their cases, though not in his, the due penalty of sin pronounced upon them by law. They die to law through law (Gal. 2:19). The fact that death for them leads up into the spirit world of light is due to their following him in spiritual fellowship. **Bring forth fruit unto God.** Language of the marriage relationship. The union with Christ will be productive of results that God can use.

5. **In the flesh.** The word flesh when used ethically denotes all that within a man which demands its own gratification regardless of any other interest. When it is unrestrained it expresses itself in the activities described in Gal. 5:19-21. To be in the flesh usually means to be under the control of this selfish instinct. Here the expression may refer more to the general flesh and blood life before the flesh body has died. **Were through the law.** Were stirred up through the law. The law's prohibition excited them to perverse activity (3:20; 5:20 and especially 7:7-11). **Fruit unto death.** The offspring of the old relation to law was action that wrecked the personality.

6. **Discharged from the law.** Our relation to law has been destroyed. The death penalty for failure to meet the law's ideal has come upon us and we have passed out of law's sphere with Christ into the spirit world. **Newness of spirit.** A spirit which belongs to the New Spirit Age. **Oldness of the letter.** The writ-

3. *The law does not create sin; it reveals sin. As the law approaches to point out the righteousness that leads to life and to pronounce penalty upon unrighteousness, the ever-present deadly Sin that lies dormant in me springs up to produce those deeds upon which the law pronounces the death penalty.*  
7: 7-12.
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ten law belonged to the old age, the age of flesh (v. 5). We no longer continue our futile effort to meet unaided the requirements of the ideal presented in the law, as we did in the old flesh age. We have passed into the New Age of Spirit where our spirits, re-enforced by the Spirit of Christ, as will appear in ch. 8, are now able to "serve" God successfully. The word "serve" goes back to the figure of bond service in 6: 15-23.

"Do not infer, as some Gentile Christians have done, that in speaking of the law as that which stirs up Sin's passions and as that from whose jurisdiction we have escaped, I consider the law to be a sinful agency whose ethical standards we Christians need no longer regard. I abhor such a view. What I mean is that I should never have recognized my own fatally sinful disposition except through the action of the law upon me. You may see, as I certainly do, a picture of our own spiritual history in the story of law, Sin and death in the Garden of Eden. I should never have recognized the fatal inclination in me to want what God would keep from me, if God's law had not said to me, Thou shalt not covet (7). As soon as this command came my natural instincts rose in strong desire of the forbidden thing, and Sin utilized the occasion to stir up in me a mad riot of covetous desires. As long as there was no command of God, Sin lay in a death-like sleep within me, and I went cheerfully on unconscious of the real situation (8). But when the command came and the issue was developed, the sinful disposition leaped up within me. I yielded to it and all the deadly consequences of sin began to appear (9). The commandment which pointed out the way of life turned out to be my death sentence (10). For Sin took the occasion which the commandment created, deceived me as it did our first parents, and brought ruin upon me (11). This shows what I think of the law. Let no one in excuse of his own misconduct attribute to me any depreciation of its ethical standards! The law is sacred and right and beneficent (12)."

7. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet:

7. **Is the law sin?** By representing the law to be an agency which belongs to the present flesh age of Sin, an agency which stirs up the sinful passions and from which a man does well to be released by death, Paul might seem to have identified the law with Sin. This was probably the view attributed to him by many Gentile Christians. They proceeded to infer that therefore they were warranted in ignoring the law's ethical ideals, at least so far as these ideals concerned the conduct of the short-lived flesh body soon to be laid off at the dawning of the New Age of spirit. Paul was profoundly concerned to correct this misunderstanding of his gospel both for the sake of the moral safety of Gentile Christians, who are directly addressed here, and because the prevalence of such a misconception of his teaching would of course antagonize the Jews both Christian and non-Christian, whom Paul hoped to see soon coming to stand with all Gentile Christians (11: 11-32) on the common Christian platform which he is stating in Romans. **I.** Paul begins to speak in the first person. It is his own spiritual autobiography that appears here, but it is his own intense personal experience interpreted in the light of the presuppositions of his thought, that is, in the light of what he found in the first three chapters of Genesis, an experience regarded by him as one that would therefore be more or less thoroughly realized in the case of every man. **Had not known sin except through the law.** This does not mean that he would not have recognized a given course of conduct as wrong unless the law had pronounced it wrong. It means rather that he would not have recognized the presence in him of a slumbering, but real and fatal inclination to do the wrong thing, unless the law by forbidding such conduct, had aroused this sinful disposition to reveal itself in overt transgression. He would not have recognized that he was really a slave of Sin. This is the situation described in 5: 20, where Sin is represented to have been really in the world in all the centuries preceding Moses, but to have been provoked into special activity by the entrance of the law. The purpose of the law therefore, is to bring Sin out into the open where it can be adequately dealt with, to make the disease reveal itself in unmistakable symptoms so that it can be cured. **I had not known coveting.** Coveting is a strong desire for what is forbidden. It may be that Paul's

8. but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting: for apart from the law sin *is* dead.
9. And I was alive apart from the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died:

sense of sinfulness had come to him in connection with some specific unlawful desire, some envious desire for reputation and honor in the circle of ambitious young rabbis in Jerusalem (Gal. 1: 14), or for some of the things mentioned in the commandment, another's wife or property (Ex. 20: 17). If so, he interpreted his experience in the light of the unlawful desire of Adam and Eve for forbidden fruit in Eden.

8. **Sin finding occasion.** Finding a chance to utilize for my ruin the unlawful passions (cf. "Sin's passions," v. 5) stirred into activity by the coming of the law. Sin seems to be regarded as an actual personality. It plays the same part here that the serpent did in Eden, when man's natural desire ("saw that the tree was good for food," Gen. 3: 6), stimulated, or at least brought clearly to consciousness, by God's commandment, was used by the serpent to work ruin. **All manner of coveting.** Knowledge of nakedness immediately followed in the Genesis narrative, and all the forms of sin that preceded the flood ("every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" Gen. 6: 5). **Apart from law sin is dead.** Evidently from the whole context not non-existent and so created by the law, but dormant in a death-like sleep. The word is chosen also because Paul wishes to bring out with rhetorical effect the fact that Sin coming to life in him changed his life into death.

9. **I was alive apart from law once**—started on the way to eternal life, certain to attain it if the law had kept away? Probably not, for Sin was sleeping within, sure of its victim, ready to awake and assert control as soon as anything stirred the passions. The sentence describes the state of Adam and Eve in the Genesis narrative before God's commandment came to them. Did Paul think that they would have lived on happily forever if there had been no commandment given them? He is evidently not trying here really to grapple with the problem of the origin of sin, but to show that the law is not an evil thing and that its ethical standards may not be discarded. If he has his own experience here in mind, he is perhaps thinking of the period in his early life before he became conscious of seriously wanting anything that he ought not to have—perhaps before he began to make professional study of

10. and the commandment, which *was* unto life, this I found *to be* unto death:
  11. for sin, finding occasion, through the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me.
  12. So that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good.
4. *Not the law but Sin causes my death. My own better nature sides with the law, recognizes in it the guide to life and desires to follow it. The difficulty is that my lower nature houses Sin, gives it vantage ground, and so my whole being is dominated by Sin, reduced to despair and death. (Thank God there is a deliverer!) 7: 13-25.*

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the law. I died. The penalty for the disobedience in the garden was death, (Gen. 3: 3), the death that began immediately in the form of at least partial estrangement from God and ultimately resulted, as Paul would say, in physical death with whatever undesirable consequences were to come still later. In Paul's own case death would have been conscious estrangement from God, the restless conscience. It may not have seemed to be "death" to him at the time, but now as he looks back over his experience from the Christian standpoint and interprets it in the light of the Genesis narrative, he sees that it was really death.

10. **Which was unto life.** Which commanded that which was necessary to life, and so pointed out the way of life.

11. **Beguiled me.** "The serpent beguiled me" (Gen. 3: 13).

12. Sums up the answer to v. 7. The law, even the specific commandment that resulted in death, is sacred and right and beneficent.

"Can it be said that even if I do regard the law as in itself good, still I represent it to be that which brings death upon its possessors, and so to be something whose ideals cannot safely be adopted? Nothing could be farther from my meaning! Sin is what brings death; the law simply brings to light the real malignity of Sin by giving it opportunity to produce death through the malignant use of so good a thing as law (13). The law cannot directly cause death for it holds up ideals that appeal to the spirit and lead to



13. Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shewn to be sin, by working death to me through

life. The trouble is that I, before whom these ideals are held up, am thoroughly under the dominance of the selfish side of my nature. I am, therefore, an absolute slave to Sin (14). I act like a slave. I do whatever I am ordered to do without understanding the reason for it. I go further than this—I do not do what I want to do and I often do what I hate to do (15). But the fact that my real self does not want to do the unlawful things that I do, shows that I do recognize the law to be possessed of a beautiful nobility and not to be a death dealing agency (16). It is not the law, but Sin, that we need to recognize as our enemy. Our better nature has no contention with law. It is not my real self that disobeys the law, but Sin that dwells in me (17). I make this statement deliberately, for I understand myself well since the law has revealed me to myself. In me, that is in my lower, selfish nature, nothing good has found a place. This is evident because my good will is not able to express itself in good conduct (18). The good I wish to do, I fail to do, and the evil I wish not to do, I keep practicing (19). This shows that I in my real self approve the law, and that Sin housed in my flesh is the death dealing enemy I have to fear (20). This then is my desperate situation, in which the law, good as it is, has no power to help me. I find as an established fact a fatal order in myself: I who would do good find a tyranny of evil always present (21). My real self looks with approving delight upon God's law (22), but in my lower nature and its organs of expression there is another law than God's, warring against the high law of God that my higher nature accepts. There rages in my temptable members the terrible energy of Sin. It wins the battle and captures my soul (23). I am a wretched man. Who can ever deliver my higher self from this body that has afforded Sin such a secure fortress and that is dragging my captive personality down to the ruin of death (24)! (Thank God the great deliverance comes through Jesus Christ our Lord.) So let me emphasize once more the fact that my higher nature finds God's law a holy agency, pointing out the way to life, not bringing death upon me. It is my flesh, serving the foul law of Sin, that has brought me into bondage and death (25)."

13. Did then that which is good become death. Although Paul has vigorously asserted that the law is beneficent (v. 12), still those Gentile Christians that are eager to claim Paul as sponsor for discarding the ethical standards of the law, say Paul must admit



that which is good;—that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful.

14. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15. For that which I do I know not: for not what

that the law, though good in itself, is deadly in its operation, an electric current that men would better not touch! **Working death to me through that which is good.** Sin is the deadly thing. The law simply reveals the presence and peculiarly venomous character of Sin, a venom that shows itself in Sin's readiness to make so good a thing as the law an instrument of death.

14. **For we know that the law is spiritual.** Gives a reason why the law could not of itself cause death, namely, it belongs to the spiritual sphere, the sphere of life. Paul has not forgotten what he said in 7:6 about the law being opposed to spirit. The law holds up a spiritual ideal, but is not able to secure the realization of that ideal in an age of flesh. In this way it reveals sin and prepares men to look to personal spiritual sources for help. It does then belong to and operate in the age of flesh, but it is spiritual in that it presents a spiritual ideal—an ideal that Paul's gospel proposes not to discard, but to realize through personal connection of the believer with the Lord of the spiritual world. **Carnal.** There are two Greek words, *sarkinos*=fleshy, made of flesh, and *sarkikos*=fleshly, having the nature of flesh. The latter is more appropriately used of ethical relations but the use of the former might be a very emphatic way of expressing ethical deficiency. Cf. I Cor. 3:1-3 where both words appear. The manuscripts vary between the two words here in Romans. Paul evidently knows that the words flesh and spirit are in sufficiently common use to be entirely intelligible to his readers. The word flesh, when used ethically, designates that which proposes to take what it wants regardless of any other interest. The spirit is that part of a man which would regard the interests of others, God and man. Paul's best description of the two is in Gal. 5:19-23. With the ethical phases of flesh and spirit in human life were associated certain cosmic phases which will appear in ch. 8. **Sold under sin.** The figure of course cannot be pressed so as to show in detail who sold, to whom, and for how much. It simply expresses the absolute bondage to Sin which consists in the thorough dominance of the flesh, or selfish instinct.

15. **For that which I do I know not.** A slave often simply carries out the orders of his owner without knowing what they mean.

I would that do I practise; but what I hate, that I do.

16. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good.
17. So now it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me.

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Not only so but **what I hate that I do**. A slave often does for his master what is personally repulsive to him. This absolute bondage to Sin of course characterizes the man who has not yet been set at liberty by his alliance in faith with the personality of the Lord of the spirit world (6: 12-14; 8: 1-17). It seems to indicate that Paul himself had passed through some terrible inner struggle in the period before he met Jesus Christ, though so far as current Pharisaic standards of outward conduct were concerned, he had been recognized as a man of exemplary life (Phil. 3:6). His interpretation of his own inner struggle may be somewhat colored by the struggles that he had seen in the lives of men in the slums whose consciences had been quickened by his preaching, and who did not quickly find the liberty of the life of faith.

16. **I consent unto the law that it is good.** Even the man in the midst of the deadly struggle into which the law has plunged him, must admit it. The law is beautiful and noble, not a death dealing power.

17. **It is no more I that do it, but sin.** Paul's practical purpose needs to be kept clearly in mind here and in the following verses. This purpose is to secure on the part of the Gentile Christians such loyalty to the ethical standards of the law (made possible by their faith union with Christ) as will keep them from licentious lives. He wishes to make them realize the awful peril of trifling with sin (cf. 6: 12-14, 19-22; 7: 4; 8: 12-13). So he first clears the law from all suspicions that would lead to discarding its ethical standards, and then proceeds to picture for them the terrible tragedy of the soul that was being lost before Christ found it. Incidentally also this procedure contributes to his fundamental desire to state a platform to which all, Jews as well as Gentiles, may be invited. He shows the Jew how helpless the law is apart from Christ to secure the realization of its own ideal. Even the man who "consents to the law that it is good," and so constitutes the most favorable case imaginable, cannot be brought by the law to the moral victory of the spiritual life. He shows the Gentile that the ethical standard of the law must and can be met through spiritual fellowship with Christ.

18. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not.
19. For the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practise.
20. But if what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me.

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In picturing the terrible struggle of the soul that was being lost, Paul is not to be regarded as a professional teacher of the psychology of religion. He is stating, doubtless in terms of the popular psychology of his day, which he assumes will be perfectly intelligible to the little groups of commonplace Christians in Rome, the great facts of personal experience in the struggle against Sin. He pictures two elements in man's personality. The higher one is called "the inner man" (v. 12), "the mind" (v. 23), and the "I," which is in sympathy with the "spiritual law" (vs. 14, 16) and therefore, in some sense at least, "spiritual" and "spirit" (cf. 8: 16). The lower element is called "the flesh," "the members" (v. 23), "the body" (8: 13). In addition to these two elements there seems to be a personal power called "Sin" from without, that finds congenial housing in the "flesh" and, when fortified there, dominates the whole personality against the futile protest of the higher element. The personalizing of Sin might naturally be due to the influence of the narrative in Gen. 3, where the serpent with its evil purpose antedates Adam's sin (cf. II Cor. 11: 3). How vital a part of Paul's thought this seemed to him to be is not apparent. In his description of the sinful Gentile world (1: 18-32) he makes no reference to it.

18. **In me.** Here the pronoun designates the whole personality including "flesh" but is so qualified as to recognize the special reference of the word to the higher element in vs. 19-20. **In my flesh dwelleth no good thing.** And yet to Paul the flesh is not inherently bad, for Christ possessed "flesh" (8: 3) and "the saints" all still have "flesh" (8: 12). The "body," which in some uses of the word seems equivalent to "flesh," could be laid on God's altar as a holy offering (12: 1), and "the members" could be presented to God as tools of righteousness (6: 13). It does, however, easily afford housing to Sin, and the combination of "Sin in the flesh" keeps the "I" from doing the good that it wills to do.

20. **It is no more I that do it.** And yet this does not exculpate the "I" since men are "inexcusable" for sinning (1: 22; 2: 1)!

21. I find then the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present.
22. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:
23. but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members.
24. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?
25. I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then I myself with the mind serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

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There almost seems to be in the background another "I," an inexcusable "I," that lets the Sin inhabited flesh conquer the "I" that wills to do right.

21. **The law.** The principle or the established order.

22. **After the inward man.** Perhaps so called because the physical flesh is the outer coating. It is perhaps significant that the element at the center, the inner man, the "I," is on God's side and approves of God's law, while the evil element is the more superficial.

23. **Bringing me into captivity.** Yet this very citadel of personality is captured by Sin. **The law of sin.** The principle, or the control, enforced by Sin.

24. **The body of this death.** The body smitten with this terrible death. The "I" is a prisoner in a body inhabited by Sin and condemned to death. Somewhat similar ideas were current in and before Paul's time. "Our soul is dead and buried in our body as if in a tomb. But if it were to die, then our soul would live according to its proper life, being released from the evil and dead body to which it is bound" (Philo, *On the Allegories*, I, 33, expounding and endorsing Heraclitus). But Paul will show a way unknown to Philo by which this life in the "tomb" can be glorified, and the "tomb" itself be made the "temple of God."

25. **I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.** As the text stands this is a parenthetical outburst, as if Paul could not wait to finish his period before telling the good news of release. Or

5. *The secret of the faith-righteous man's victory and hope. Those who have entered into faith-fellowship with Jesus Christ are victorious in this terrible struggle against Sin in the flesh. The Spirit of God has so re-enforced their higher nature as to give them victory over sin and therefore assurance of a glorious career with Christ Jesus in the Age to come, 8: 1-30.*

perhaps his Christian amanuensis put in the parenthesis on his own account (cf. 16: 22). **So then.** A summing up of the whole discussion. The better nature approves the law of God, recognizes that it is not sinful (v. 7) and is not intended to produce death (v. 13). But its fatal inefficiency lies in the fact that Sin in the flesh prevents the realization of its ideals. The thought of 8: 1 ff. is logically connected with what has preceded, but the verbal connection is not close as in the case of 6: 1 with 5: 20, 6: 15 with 6: 14, 7: 7 with 7: 5, 7: 13 with 7: 12. We may suppose that Paul stopped dictating here and after an interval of some hours or days began again with 8: 1.

- (1) *The spiritual nature of the faith-righteous man has been so re-enforced by the Spirit of God as to be released from bondage to Sin in the flesh, enabled to meet the ethical demands of the law and be sure of life even for the body as well as the spirit. Therefore no dalliance with the flesh! (8: 1-14).*

"There is then, as we have been saying in all our argument, no verdict of condemnation to be feared in the judgment day by those who are living in faith union with Christ Jesus (1). The life giving Spirit that resides in him, and also in them by virtue of their faith-union with him, has established its control in their lives and so freed them from the control of Sin and death (2). This termination of the control of Sin and death the law was impotent to secure because man's lower nature would never obey the law's commands. But God by sending his own Son, possessed of the nature that in other men is so hospitable to Sin, with the purpose of having him deal at close range with the power of Sin, succeeded in condemning Sin to expulsion from its domain in the lower nature of man (3). This God did with the purpose of securing the realization of the law's ideal in lives that are no longer lived in accord with the impulses of the lower nature, but

## 8. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

in accord with the higher nature that is akin to, and now controlled by, the Spirit of God (4). It was this victory of the higher nature that had to be won, for they that are in accord with the lower nature fix their attention upon the gratification of its demands, while they that are in accord with the higher nature fix their attention upon the fulfillment of its desire (5), and to do the former results in the ruin of death, while to do the latter means life and peace (6). Attention fixed upon the lower nature is hostility to God, for it is open rebellion against God's law, and in the nature of the case must be, for God's law requires love, while the lower nature is thoroughly unloving (7). So they that live in accord with the lower nature necessarily cannot please God (8). But you are living, not in accord with the lower nature, but in accord with the higher, spiritual nature, for I certainly may assume that the mighty Spirit of God has allied himself with your higher nature. Of course, whenever this is not so, and the Spirit of Christ in whom God's Spirit dwells in fulness is not in a man, then that man does not belong to Christ and has no place among those whom Christ saves (9). But if Christ is in you, then the body to be sure is still death-smitten because it is a part of the sphere of Sin and death; but the higher spiritual nature is free from death because, re-enforced by the Spirit of Christ, it is able to live the righteous life (10). Moreover there is victory also for the body, since the Spirit of him who raised Jesus' body from the dead lives in you. He that raised Jesus' dead body in new and glorious form will do the same for yours, since the same mighty resurrecting Spirit dwells in you that dwelt in him (11). So then, Brothers, bear well in mind, no matter what some misguided and misnamed Christians may say to the contrary, that we are under no obligation to gratify the demands of our lower flesh nature while in this world of flesh (12). If you do live in accord with the flesh, the fatal ruin of death will blight and destroy all your being. But if, with the re-enforcement that your spiritual natures have received from the Spirit of God, you mercilessly put to death the evil practices of your lower nature, your whole being will have the life that reaches its fulness in the Spirit Age to come (13). For it is those now being led by the Spirit of God who will take their place among the sons of God in the Spirit Age to come (14)."

**i. Therefore.** Since Jesus Christ has delivered us (7:25). **No condemnation.** In the coming messianic judgment. The verdict of the judgment day has already been pronounced (cf. 5:



2. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death.
3. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

1). **In Christ Jesus.** United with him in the spiritual fellowship of faith.

2. **The law of the Spirit of life.** The control of the life giving Spirit. Two laws or controlling agencies have been spoken of in 7:23-25. One of these, "the law of my mind," has now been victoriously re-enforced by the energy of the Spirit of God. **In Christ Jesus.** The Spirit is in Christ Jesus. Cf. v. 11 where it is implied that through the presence of the life giving Spirit in Christ God raised him from the dead.

3. **What the law could not do.** Namely, enforce its own ethical ideals, which the flesh so violently and successfully resented. It could simply command and threaten but could not secure obedience. The structure of the sentence is broken. It begins as if it would read: "What the law could not do, God did by sending etc." **In the likeness of.** No implication of unreality in Jesus' body, but of the sinlessness which Paul's readers attribute to Christ (cf. II Cor. 5:21) and of previous existence as God's Son in another than flesh form (cf. Phil. 2:7). **Sinful flesh**—or Sin's flesh, that is flesh that readily houses Sin (7:18). **For sin.** "With reference to sin." The phrase "as an offering" is not in the Greek. Paul may have in mind the figure of Christ's death as a sacrifice for sin, a figure which he occasionally uses. The Greek phrase used here is used frequently of the sin offerings in the LXX of Leviticus, but in a context in which offerings are clearly being discussed. Here it has more probably the general meaning, "to do something about sin," namely the thing that is stated in the next phrase. **Condemned sin in the flesh.** Condemned Sin to cease the control or dominion which it had been exercising over the personality and over the whole race of flesh men through the advantage that its hold on the flesh gave it. The reign of Sin and death in the personality and in the race has been very prominent in the preceding paragraphs (5:14, 17, 21; 6:9, 12, 14, 17; 7:14-25). What Christ did to end this reign Paul does not state here. He has before represented Christ's death and resurrection into the glorious spirit world to have been the means of founding a new race (5:12-21) free from the power



4. that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.
5. For they that are <sup>after</sup> the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit.
6. For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace:

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of Sin and death in all its individual members (6: 1-7: 6). On the special significance of the death of Jesus in this process see the discussion of 3: 24 ff.

4. **The ordinance of the law.** What the law pronounces right. Perhaps the singular number implies emphasis of the law's ideal rather than of its detailed commandments. This ideal is the life of love. "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (13: 8-10). **Walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.** They live the unselfish life in accord with the desires of the higher nature (7: 22), and not the selfish life of the lower, flesh nature. This they are able to do because the higher nature has been re-enforced by God's Spirit (v. 2). The way in which "spirit" and "flesh" without the article are contrasted here indicates that it is "spirit" and "flesh" in general that are meant, not simply the Holy Spirit and the individual's flesh. Paul clearly regards "spirit" as the proper designation of an element in the believer's personality (8: 10, 16). Whether he would apply this word to the higher element in the personality still enslaved to Sin is uncertain. He used other terms in 7: 14-25. In I Cor. 5: 5 and II Cor. 7: 1 he uses the term in speaking of those who sin, but in both cases they are Christians who have sinned.

5. **After the flesh.** In accord with, or subject to, the flesh. **Mind the things of the flesh.** Give the mind, or the attention, to gratifying the selfish demands of the lower nature. "What gets your attention, gets you." **The things of the spirit.** The unselfish desires of the higher nature now re-enforced by the Spirit of God.

6. **The mind of the flesh.** Such attention or thought as the flesh demands. **Death** is a ruinous blight that falls on the whole personality, affecting both soul and body. As it affects the soul it shows itself in a painful, paralyzing estrangement from God and men that is the necessary consequence of selfishness in the personality of the selfish man. Its effect upon the body Paul, fol-

7. because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be:
8. and they that are in the flesh cannot please God.
9. But ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.
10. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.
11. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ

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lowing the narrative in Genesis, considers to be a remediless physical dissolution (cf. 5: 14). **Life and peace.** Life also concerns both soul and body. As it concerns the soul it consists in such loving unselfish adjustment to other personalities, God and men, as results in the normal development and activity of the highest powers. Its "peace" is contrasted with the ruinous confusion, the painful disorder of the personality upon which the blight of death has fallen. As it affects the body it does not eliminate the necessity of physical dissolution, but it makes such dissolution a matter of no consequence by involving the possession of a new and better body (vs. 10-11, 21-25; I Cor. 15: 50-53; II Cor. 5: 1-2).

8. **Cannot please God.** Because God is love and the man who is "in the flesh" is in the nature of the case unloving. Two persons going in opposite directions cannot travel together.

9. **The Spirit of Christ.** This expression seems to be synonymous with "Spirit of God" in the last sentence and with "Christ" in the next sentence. God's Spirit is Christ's Spirit because God's Spirit is fully in Christ, and Christ brings it with him into the life of the believer. In II Cor. 13: 14 language is used that indicates some clearer distinction. If Paul's mind worked upon the metaphysical questions connected with the personality of God, he has not left the workings of his mind on record. **None of his.** Because those who belong to him are, in the very nature of faith, in personal spiritual fellowship with him.

10. **Is dead because of sin.** Physical dissolution is certain to occur in due time, because the body is a part of the world in

Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

12. So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh:

13. for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

which Sin and death reign. **Because of righteousness.** The spirit is now able to live the righteous life.

11. See on v. 6. The believer has now in him the same powerful Spirit that was in Christ, and so may expect that Spirit to do for his mortal body what it did for Christ's mortal body. Whether this means to Paul the transformation of a dead or dying body into a new kind of living body, or the replacing of the one by the other is not entirely clear. Cf. II Cor. 5: 1-2 with Phil. 3: 21 and I Cor. 15: 52.

12. **So then, brethren.** Again an exhortation to the readers, as in 6: 12, 20. **Debtors not to the flesh.** Perhaps the argument had sometimes been that the lusts of the flesh had a certain right to gratification. It was their due. (I Cor. 6: 13-17).

13. **Mortify.** Put to death. Make an end of selfish living. **Deeds of the body.** "Body" is used instead of "flesh," because the thought of v. 11 is being carried on. **Ye shall live—** in the Coming Age of spirit.

14. **Sons of God.** A new thought begins here, which springs out of the idea of life in the Coming Age with which v. 13 closed. Anyone who is brought by resurrection into the spirit world (v. 11) is thereby constituted a son of God. This was an idea current in Pauline circles. Luke represents Jesus to have said that after the resurrection "they are equal unto the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Lk. 20: 36). In Ps. 29: 1 (LXX 28: 1) and Ps. 89: 6 (LXX 88: 7) the Greek translation calls the angels "sons of God." So also in the Hebrew of Job 1: 6, 2: 1, 38: 7, but not in the Greek translation which reads "angels" instead of "sons." (Cf. *Enoch* 69: 4-5, 71: 1, Charles, emended text). If this be the underlying thought, then those who are led by the Spirit of God are already practically introduced into the spirit world where beings are called "sons of God."

- (2) *We who are being led on by God's Spirit in victory over the flesh are made by Him to feel that we are sons of God, brothers of Christ the Son of God, and therefore sure to inherit with Him a glorious career in the New Age when all nature shall be glorified by emancipation from decay and death, 8: 15-30.*

"It is with no fearful spirit of bondage like that which possessed us under Sin's dominion that we now face the future, but rather with the victorious spirit of those who know that they have already practically been adopted by God as sons of the spirit world and will soon receive the bodily evidence of it (cf. v. 23). It is because of this practical adoption that we find ourselves both in private and in our public meetings crying out "Father, Father" in great stress of spirit, as did our Lord (cf. Mk. 14: 36) (15). This outcry shows that God's Spirit is within us giving assurance to our spirits that we are indeed God's beloved children (16), and if children of course heirs, heirs of God himself, destined to inherit the life of the Coming Age, associate heirs with Christ, the Lord of the Coming Age, if we now faithfully suffer the figurative death of the body (cf. 6: 4) and the persecutions (cf. 5: 2-5) to which we are subject because of our faith union with him, in order that we may shine forth with him in bodies radiant with love in the Coming Age (17). Such sufferings in this present age are not to be compared for a moment with the holy radiance of that life which will soon be revealed to and in us (18). It will include not only ourselves but all the world of nature in which we now live. All nature is eagerly waiting for the time to come when we as sons of God shall receive the glorious bodies that are to be ours in the New Age (19). For nature does not willingly acquiesce in the disintegration and futile emptying out of life to which all its processes lead. It was subjected to such disadvantage by God himself (cf. Gen. 3: 17-18), but subjected by him in hope (20) that the time would come when it would be released from the law of decay and death and be granted the same radiance of imperishable life which the children of God are to possess (21). It does not willingly acquiesce, I say, for we know that all nature in all its parts has long been groaning in the birth pangs of the New Age (22). This distress is not confined to nature, for we ourselves, who in the possession of the Holy Spirit already have the beginnings of the life of the New Age, are also groaning with longing as we wait for God to take the last step in the act of adoption, which will put us among the sons of God in the spirit world, I mean the freeing of our bodies from the law of decay and death and their transformation into the glorious form that shall be theirs (23). It was the hopeful expectation of this that we began to cherish when we were first united by faith with Christ and so

15. For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

were assured of salvation from this age and its judgment day. Of course, we did not see it, for then there would have been no occasion to hope for it (24). But because we do not see it, we have a chance to show our patience in the steadiness of our hope (25). We are oppressed by the presence of the body, and our hope of deliverance from it is sometimes weak, but in all our weakness the Spirit, who helped us into the beginnings of our sense of sonship, helps us still. He helps our weak spirits as they, not knowing how to frame their petitions, try to lift themselves in prayer. He takes the groanings born of our earnest longing for the Coming Age, too intense for speech, and presents them for us before the face of God (26). When the heart-searching God finds these inarticulate petitions in hearts possessed by his Spirit, he knows well what they mean, for his Spirit is always presenting our needs before God in sympathy with the mind of God himself (27). And so we present our inarticulate petitions for the glory of the New Age with strong hope, for we know that with us who love him God works in all ways to secure this great good that we desire. With us who love him, I say, for we are those whom he has called into this love with purpose to give the glory of the New Age to us (28). We were in his mind ages ago. Even then he determined that we should be like his Son in the possession of bodies radiant with love, so that his Son might rule like a first born over a multitude of brothers (29). Then he called us through his Son with a loving insistence that we did not resist, and when we came to his Son in penitent faith he declared us righteous even before the judgment day. Surely we may count ourselves already among the glorified! (30)."

15. **For ye received not.** Past tense referring to the time when the new relationship began. **Spirit of bondage again unto fear.** The relation to Sin in the flesh had been bondage (7:14) with constant fear of penalty. Paul had also, with some apology, presented the new relation to righteousness as bondage (6:18-19). Now he lifts the relationship from that of slave to that of son. **Spirit of adoption.** Spirit or disposition that is suitable in one who is adopted. The adoption is the act by which one is made a son, that is, an inhabitant of the spirit world. (See on v. 14). This act now practically performed (v. 16) will be completed when a resurrection body, redeemed from the power of decay and death and suited to existence in the spirit world,

16. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God:

17. and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and

shall be provided. We "are waiting for our adoption to wit: the redemption of our body" (v. 23). In Roman law the relation of an adopted son to the father was as close and indestructible as that of a son by birth.\* **Whereby we cry Abba, Father.** This disposition of "sons of God" or "sons of the resurrection" (Lk. 20: 36), expresses itself in the cry, "Abba Father" which seems to have been a common expression in prayer. Abba is the Aramaic word for Father. Apparently the Aramaic word and its Greek translation had come to form one title (cf. Mk. 14: 36; Gal. 4: 6). It may have been used in the prayers of the synagogue among the Jews of the dispersion, where fragments of Aramaic would easily survive in Greek speech. Or Gentile Christians may have kept the first word of the Lord's Prayer in Aramaic "Abba" (J. H. Moulton). This "outcry" of the soul to the Father shows that "adoption" is not conceived by Paul as a mere mechanical or physical setting of a person over from the flesh to the spirit world. It is an experience which has both a physical and deeply emotional side, just as the word "glory" when applied to the future life by Paul has an ethical and a material aspect, moral excellence with radiance of form.

16. **The Spirit himself beareth witness.** How does the Spirit bear witness? Presumably by instigating the cry, "Abba Father." But why attribute this cry to the Spirit's instigation? Perhaps because Paul directly felt the Spirit of God, or because it was a logical inference from the prophecy so much emphasized in the early church (cf. Acts 2: 16 ff.), that in the last days the Spirit would operate among men, and because the utterance of this cry often accompanied the gift of prophecy or tongues (I Cor. 12) naturally interpreted as effects of the Spirit's presence. **With our spirit,** as if spirit were a constituent element at least of the believer's personality; see on v. 4. **Children of God.** Children is perhaps a warmer word than sons, more suggestive of the close loving personal relationship now being emphasized, since "sons of God" was the somewhat technical designation of the angelic inhabitants of the spirit world.

17. **Heirs.** The idea of "inheriting" the Coming Age was a common Jewish idea (cf. 4: 13). "The meek shall inherit the earth," Mt. 5: 5. Cf. Mt. 25: 34. The Roman "heir" had recognized right and standing while the testator still lived.

\* (See Muntz, *Rome, St. Paul and the Early Church*, Chs. 5-7.)



- joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him* that we may be also glorified with *him*.
18. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward.
19. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God.
20. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of

**Joint heirs with Christ.** Christ has passed into the spirit world and so has "inherited" it. Now through the intimate faith relationship existing between Christ and the spirits of believers they already have potentially "inherited" a place with him in the spirit world, and are therefore associate heirs with him. **Be glorified with him.** They will soon receive the "glorified" spiritual body (I Cor. 15:43-44, 50-52) like Christ's (Phil. 3:20-21). In order that this may happen they must be ready to **suffer with him**, that is, suffer the death with him that was symbolized by baptism (6:4), and resolutely "put to death the deeds of the body" (v. 13). To do this in existing social relations will involve "persecution," "tribulation," and even the "sword" (v. 35). Cf. 5:2-5; Col. 1:24.

18. **The glory which shall be revealed.** The glorified spirit bodies referred to in the preceding verse, and all their glorified environment in the spirit world described in the following verses. All this material or physical glory is intimately associated with the idea of moral excellence. It is primarily moral excellence shining out in physical radiance. This idea which meant so much to Paul is somewhat foreign to our modes of thought, yet it readily lends itself to the presuppositions of our thought. It suggests the immortal spirit working triumphantly and with invincible good will upon a suitable environment through some form of self manifestation, that is, some kind of "body."

19. **For.** The greatness of the glory is emphasized by showing that it involves a transformation of all the natural world. **Earnest expectation.** The Greek word means watching with outstretched head, that is, in suspense. **The revealing of the sons of God.** The time when they will stand out in their glorious spiritual bodies, openly revealed as "sons of God," glorified inhabitants of the spirit world.

20. **Vanity.** Fruitlessness, frailty. Everything in the natural world finally decays and disappears in death. **Him who subjected**



- its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope
21. that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.
  22. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.
  23. And not only so, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for *our* adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.
  24. For by hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth?

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it. That is, God. Paul has Gen. 3: 17-18 in mind—"cursed is the ground."

21. **Delivered from the bondage of corruption.** From bondage to the law of decay. The tree reaches its culmination and begins to decay. **The liberty of the glory of the children of God.** Such liberty from this bondage to decay and death as the glorified bodies of the sons of God will enjoy (cf. Rev. 21: 1-5). The idea of a transformed nature appears in the prophets perhaps as symbolism. Is. 11, 35, 65: 17; 66: 22 (cf. *Enoch* 45: 5).

22. **The whole creation groaneth and travaileth.** Perhaps Paul's imagination saw in the howling storm, the restless sea and the frequent earthquake, signs of nature's intense desire in all its parts for liberation. **Together**, all nature, in all its parts.

23. **The first fruits of the Spirit.** The beginning of the New Age of spirit, namely, the Holy Spirit. Believers have begun the life of the New Age, since the Spirit has entered them; but they join nature in intense longing for the full experience, namely, the possession of glorified bodies which will constitute their full "adoption" into the world of the glorified sons of God. (cf. II Cor. 5: 4-5). **Redemption of our body.** Liberation of our body from bondage to the law of decay and death.

24. **By hope were we saved.** In or by hope. At the time when we formed the faith alliance with Christ which guaranteed to us our entrance into the New Age, and so "saved" us, we necessarily had only a sure "hope," for that Age was still in the future.

25. But if we hope for that which we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for it.
26. And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered;
27. and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of* God.

25. It is necessary to urge patient hopefulness in this period of waiting for there is always danger that the great hope will abate, because of the human weakness alluded to in the next verse.

26. **In like manner.** In manner like to that which has characterized the activity attributed to him in the preceding sentences, especially v. 16. **Our infirmity.** An illustration of our weakness follows. **How to pray.** Rather, what it is fitting to pray for, how to phrase the deep longings for the New Age. **Groanings which cannot be uttered.** These groanings, or deep sighs, mentioned also in v. 23, are very possibly such signs of distress as often characterized those who exercised the so called gift of tongues. They could not express themselves in intelligible speech. (I Cor. 14:2). They did not even "know how to pray" in such a way as to be intelligible to their own understanding (I Cor. 14:14). They were simply mastered by a tremendous emotion. The powers of the spirit world, in the border land of which they were living, seized them and so filled them with the longing to come across, that they could utter only unintelligible groans and ejaculations. Since Paul himself had this experience in a high degree (I Cor. 14:18; cf. II Cor. 12:1 ff.), he is speaking here out of his own experience. This unintelligible petitionary praying by our spirits, the Holy Spirit, our intercessor in "the friendly court" of God, shares and helps us present to God.

27. **He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit.** The language is anthropomorphic. When God finds his Spirit in the human heart sharing its unutterable longings, he knows what they are because he knows what is always in the mind of the Spirit. The mind of the Spirit is in accord with his own. **The saints.** See on 1:7.

28. And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, *even* to them that are called according to *his* purpose.
29. For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren:
30. and whom he foreordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

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28. God not only understands the poor prayer that the human spirit helped by the Holy Spirit is making in its longing for the glory of the New Age, but he himself does something about it. **To them that love God all things work together.** Better, with them that love God, he works in all ways. **For good.** For the great good that they long for with unutterable groanings, namely, the glory of the New Age. That this is the "good" appears clearly in the next two verses which reach as their climax in the last clause, glorification in the New Age. **Called according to his purpose.** His purpose when he called them was to glorify them in the New Age.

29-30. The point is that God who has taken the great steps here described in dealing with his children can surely be relied upon to take the last step, up to which all the others have led, and glorify them in the New Age. It is amplification of the fact that God works with them in *all ways* (v. 28) for the great good. **Foreknew.** Recognized beforehand as those who were to love him. Paul had a strong sense of God's plan to proceed by the method of selection (see notes on 9:6 ff), but here he is simply concerned to enumerate the steps that lead inevitably up to "glorification." **Foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son.** Determined to give them glorious spiritual bodies like that of his Son. **First-born.** Priority in the time of his glorification and also superiority of position, a first born's honors in the family. **Many brethren.** Planned to include great multitudes (cf. 11:32). **Called.** Invited to become sons of God, brothers of the Christ. It is assumed that the invitation constrained. **Justified.** When the "called" responded to the invitation and in faith joined those who are to gather as brothers about the first-born, God pronounced them righteous (cf. on 3:24). **Glorified.** In the New Age. The act is spoken of as past because already virtually accomplished in giving us the Spirit (v. 23).

6. *Hymn of Triumph.* *Our glorification in the New Age is certain, assured to us by the invincible love of God which has come to us in Christ Jesus our Lord,*  
8: 31-39.

31. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?

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"What shall be our conclusion in the light of these great facts? Since God from all eternity has been for us who can stand against us? (31). Since God did not spare his own Son, the very Lord of the Coming Age, but gave him freely to open up for us a way into its glory, how can we doubt that he will grant us all the wealth of life that Age affords (32)? Who in the judgment day could successfully bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? God only, and he it is who has already pronounced the great verdict of acquittal (33)! Who could condemn us in that great day? Jesus Christ the judge, but he it is who died for us, yea more is risen from the dead, who holds the place of power at God's right hand and in God's friendly court makes presentation of our cause (34)! Who shall ever separate us from the loving Christ? Tribulation? Anguish? Persecution? Famine? Nakedness? Peril? Sword (35)? For even the sword we know! We know what the Psalmist meant when he said that we like sheep stand all day in the slaughter pen awaiting the bloody knife (36)! Nay, nay, in all these experiences, we come off conquerors,—and more—through the blessed help of the Lord who loves us (37). I stand fully convinced that nothing in the realm of the dead or the living, no angel, or lordly archangel, nothing in this dark age or in the glorious Coming Age, not anything in the heights or in the depths, not anything anywhere in all creation, shall be able to come between us and the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus Our Lord (39)."

32. **Delivered him up for us all.** To live and die for our advantage in this flesh age. Cf. 4:25. **All things.** The Greek uses the article which makes the expression mean "the whole thing," that which completes and includes everything, namely, the glory of the Coming Age which has been under discussion in

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33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth;
34. who is he that shall condemn? It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.
35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
36. Even as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.
37. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.
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the preceding verses. Since God has already given for us His own Son, the chief feature and Lord of the Coming Age, he certainly will withhold no lesser feature of that Age. 33. **God that justifieth.** This may be closely connected with what follows as the punctuation adopted in the English text indicates. Or it may be regarded as the answer to the question in the first clause of the verse. (See paraphrase.) Or all clauses in vs. 33-34 may be regarded as questions. **God's elect.** His chosen ones, those whom he foreknew (v. 29). Nothing is said here about his attitude toward those who are not "chosen," or about the reason for their not being chosen. See notes on 9: 6 ff.

34. **Maketh intercession for us.** Not to persuade God to deal kindly with us, for it was God's kindness that led him to give his own Son (v. 32) and that took all the steps described in vs. 29-30. The figure is rather that of one who represents us and our needs in a "friendly court." 35. **Of Christ.** There is manuscript authority for the reading "of God" with no difference of meaning, for the love of God is in Christ (v. 39). **Tribulation,** etc. Paul knew the meaning of each of these words from his own experience. Cf. II Cor. 11: 23-29.

36. The word "sword" suggests as its commentary Ps. 44: 22 with its picture of slaughter sheep (cf. 44: 11) waiting all day in the pen for their turn to come. The whole Psalm is one in which those that are made a "scoffing and a derision to them that are

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38. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come,
39. nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
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round about" (v. 13), look for "redemption" (v. 26), and so is appropriate to the present situation.

**38. Principalities, powers.** Classes of great archangels (cf. Col. 1:16). In the *Secrets of Enoch* 20:1 they are mentioned among others in the "fiery troops of great archangels," of the seventh heaven.

**39. Height, depth.** The heights of heaven, the region of life and angels. The depths of the abyss, the region of death and demons (cf. 10:6-7, Phil. 2:10, Lk. 8:31).

### III. THE RELATION OF THE JEWISH NATION TO JESUS' MESSIANIC SALVATION, CHS. 9-11.

1. *The present unbelief of the Jews no evidence that God does not plan to save the nation, 9: 1-29.*

9. I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with me in the Holy Ghost,

(1) *Gentile Christians must not think—as unfortunately many Jews do—that I have given up all hope of seeing my fellow countrymen accept messianic salvation and am indifferent to their condition, 9: 1-5.*

In ch. 8 Paul has been picturing the New Age of Spirit toward the wonderful "glory" of which all nature, as well as redeemed man, is straining (vs. 18-23). In that glory he has pictured Jesus Christ walking, a first-born in the midst of a host of glorified brothers (v. 29). This future is secure. No angel good or bad is able so to get between the redeemed and their Lord as to deprive them of it (vs. 31-39). And now against this beautiful picture of the messianic New Age he sees the Jewish nation, sullen and unresponsive, blind to the vision, holding almost wholly aloof from the Jesus movement which is destined to introduce the New Age. The thought fills him with profound, but by no means hopeless, sorrow.

This section, like all the rest of the letter, is most intelligible when considered to be addressed to Gentile Christians. They appear here as conceitedly thinking (11: 17-24) that, if God ever planned messianic salvation for the Jews, he has cast them off and has decided to make it a peculiarly Gentile possession. Paul's frequent arguments, proving from scripture that God always planned to have the Gentile world in his messianic kingdom, have been misunderstood by Gentile Christians to mean that God long ago decided to have none but Gentiles possess it. They argue that if he ever planned to have the Jewish nation included, it would be necessary to say that his plan has evidently failed, for the Jewish nation has rejected it (9: 6).



Paul's argument, while chiefly directed to Gentile Christians, will also incidentally be a comfort to Jewish Christians and an invitation to non-Christian Jews. That is, these chapters, like all the preceding, help to make the letter a platform to which all classes must be speedily brought in preparation for the dawning of the New Age. The argument falls into three parts. (1) In the first part he shows that the present Jewish rejection of the Jesus messianic movement is no proof that God does not propose to include the Jewish nation as a whole in it. God has always proceeded by a process of apparently arbitrary selection, taking some and rejecting others. The present generation, now so near its close, has evidently been rejected (9: 1-29). (2) This generation has been rejected because of its perverse unwillingness to accept the righteousness by faith which the gospel proclaims (9:30-10:21). (3) But the nation as a whole will soon become Christian, and the wonderful stream of God's immeasurable grace will run out into the vastness of the New Age (ch. 11).

"I wish to make solemn protest against a misunderstanding of my position which I find to be current among many Gentile Christians, who have never freed themselves from a common but unfortunate prejudice against the members of my race. They think that I, who as the enthusiastic apostle to Gentiles have become odious to my own people, have turned against my unbelieving countrymen and have ceased to feel any concern for them. Now as one who is living in daily fellowship with Christ, one whose conscience vitalized by the Holy Spirit of truth testifies to his truthfulness—those who freely call me 'liar' must believe that what I am about to say is no lie (1)!—I say that there is in my heart profound sorrow and a pain that never ceases (2). I could even wish that I might be sent away from Christ with the accursed in the judgment day, if that could bring my brother Jews to him (3). What privilege and honor God has given them! They bear the proud title Israelites, men who have prevailed with God, chosen to be his people. Upon them God's glory rested in the wilderness. With them he made solemn covenants. With them in Mt. Sinai he deposited his holy law. For them he ordained the solemn and beautiful temple ritual. To them were made the promises of the Messianic Age (4). Theirs were the patriarchal founders of the nation, peerless in the history of nations. From their stock in his fleshly descent sprang the Christ who is over all things, blessed be God forever, Amen (5)!"

1. **I lie not.** Liar was an epithet that had been often applied to Paul recently. (3: 7, II Cor. 6: 8; 11: 31). The sentence in

the order of its words and the cumulative effect of its ideas expresses extreme vehemence. Truth is the first word in the Greek sentence. The truth is spoken by one in fellowship with Christ, who can appeal to his conscience and who is living in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, in connection with whom one would not dare to lie. Such vehemence indicates that the thing about to be asserted is of great importance and something that the readers might be slow to believe. That which is asserted is Paul's profound concern over the failure of his Jewish fellow countrymen to identify themselves with the Jesus messianic movement. Since the letter is written to Gentile Christians, they are the ones who will be slow to believe this. There was a widespread prejudice against Jews in the Greco-Roman world. There were high-minded Gentiles who overcame the prejudice, attended the synagogue service and worshipped Jehovah, although without becoming Jewish proselytes. They are called in Acts "devout Greeks" (e.g., 17:4). Many of the first Gentile Christians came from this class. When they became Christians however the synagogue turned bitterly against them and made it perfectly natural for them to relapse into the general "anti-Semitic" prejudice. Inasmuch as most Christians were Gentiles, and the Jews as a nation bitterly opposed the Jesus movement, Gentile Christians easily yielded to a natural conceit and concluded that God had, either now or long ago, cast off his always perverse people (11:1) and meant messianic salvation to be, what it was fast becoming, an exclusive possession of Gentiles. Since Paul was the famous apostle to the Gentiles and proved so clearly from the scriptures that God had always had Gentiles in mind, it was easy for Gentile Christians to suppose that Paul agreed with them in the belief that there was no place for Jews in the Jesus movement. The fact that Paul had abandoned the strictly Jewish manner of life (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 2:11-14) and was everywhere regarded by his countrymen as a renegade Jew (Acts 21:21, 28), made it natural for Gentile Christians to reach this conclusion. Furthermore, Paul had probably often been heard to use of the Jews, such language as is found in 1 Thess. 2:16: they were "filling up their sins away" and "God's wrath had come upon them to the uttermost." This language was easily misunderstood to express his conclusion regarding the ultimate destiny of the nation. Paul is profoundly concerned to correct this false impression, because he feels that before the Lord comes from heaven to inaugurate the New Age, Jew and Gentile must unite in expectant waiting for him. These chapters, therefore, though addressed primarily to Gentile Christians in Rome, will be of interest to both Christian and non-Christian Jews, and Paul may have hoped that the contents of these chapters would in some way reach them.

2. that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart.
3. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh:
4. who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of *God*, and the promises;

2-3. **Unceasing pain.** Consuming grief. Here Paul uses strong language to express his intense sorrow over the condition of his countrymen. Yet in 11: 25-32 he feels very hopeful about them and breaks out again in a hymn of praise over their prospects 11: (33-36). How can he be so sorrowful here when he knows all that he will say in ch. 11? The explanation seems to be that he is speaking here in ch. 9 of the perverse generation of Jews which had now come almost to its end (it is now twenty-five or thirty years since the execution of Jesus), and in ch. 11 of the new nation that was already coming on to take its place, and that within a few years (13: 11-12) would be ready to welcome the Lord. To this older generation that had "killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets" "forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles" (I Thess. 2: 14-15) belonged Paul's parents, his old teacher Gamaliel, his associates in Jerusalem, and his friends in the Tarsus *Ghetto*, many of them earnest men for whom he had in earlier years felt a profound respect that he could never lose (10: 1-2). **Anathema from Christ.** Separated from Christ by having the "curse" of the judgment day (cf. Mt. 25: 41) pronounced on him. The spontaneous, hyperbolical expression of deep emotion. **Brethren's sake.** Jewish fellow countrymen are called "brethren" (cf. Acts 2: 29, 37; 3: 17; 13: 15, 26, 38). **According to the flesh.** Flesh not in the sense of chs. 7-8, but natural descent (cf. 1: 3).

4. Paul, the high-minded Pharisee (cf. Acts 23: 6; Phil. 3: 5), shows his national pride. **Israelites.** An august title of dignified religious origin (Gen. 32: 28; cf. Jn. 1: 47; II Cor. 11: 22). **The adoption.** The selection of the nation to be God's people in a special sense. They are called God's son in Ex. 4: 22. Perhaps Paul meant to hint by the use of this word that they would be specially eligible for adoption as "sons of God" in the Coming Age (8: 15, 23). **The glory.** The shechinah glory (Ex. 40: 34-35). Perhaps with intent to suggest their natural fitness for the "glory" of the New Age (8: 18). **The covenants.** The one at Sinai (Ex. 24: 7, 8; 34: 10) and the new covenant of Jer. 31: 31-

5. whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

34, which is the covenant of messianic salvation. This belonged to the "Jew first" (1:16; 2:10). **The giving of the law**, to Paul's mind a glorious event, although not to be over estimated or misinterpreted (Gal. 3:19). **The service**. The rich temple ritual, which had profoundly impressed the sensitive, high-strung boy from Tarsus when he came first to Jerusalem. **The promises** of messianic salvation (3:1).

5. **The fathers**. What other nation ever had such righteous founders! **Of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh**. This is the culmination: Jesus Christ was a Jew. **Who is over all, God blessed forever**. The sentence may be so punctuated as to read in several ways. (1) "The God who is over all things be (or is) blessed forever." The Greek sentence would naturally be slightly different if this were the thought. Furthermore, there would seem to be no particular propriety in breaking out into a doxology over the fact that Christ was a Jew. (2) "Of whom is Christ, who is over all things (and who is) God blessed forever." While Paul highly exalts Jesus Christ as the Lord whom Christians worship (1 Cor. 8:5-6; Phil. 2:10-11), he does not elsewhere call him God. The word "fulness" in Col. 1:19 and in the phrase "fulness of the Godhead" (Col. 2:9) is probably to be interpreted as a technical term referring to angelic beings and spheres. (3) "Christ who is over all, blessed be God forever." It is in accord with Paul's usage to speak of Christ as over all things, men and angels (1 Cor. 8:5-6; Phil. 2:10-11; Col. 1:15-17), and natural that after having done so he should break out in a doxology. Cf. 1:25.

- (2) *We cannot argue, as do some Gentile Christians, that God has not purposed to give the Jews messianic salvation, on the ground that if such a purpose were ascribed to him present Jewish opposition would necessitate concluding that his purpose had come to naught (v. 6). In dealing with the nation he has always proceeded by a process of apparently arbitrary selection, selecting some and passing others by. His passing over this present generation is simply a step forward in his great purpose to introduce the nation into messianic salvation by his ancient process of selection, 9:6-13.*

"The failure of this generation of Jews to accept Jesus' messianic salvation is no sign that God's purpose to save the nation has

6. But *it is* not as though the word of God hath come to nought. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

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come to naught. We must remember that not all who descended from the man Israel were included in the nation Israel (6). Neither were all the offspring of Abraham considered to be Abraham's children to whom God made his promises. Only in Isaac was, there that which could be called true seed (7). That is, it was not the children born by ordinary generation who were counted God's children, heirs of God's promises, but only the children born as a result of God's special promise, who are listed in God's book as Abraham's true seed, destined for the Messianic Age (8). The promise of God is on record, and applies only to the child whom Sarah bore to Abraham. It reads: "about this season will I come and Sarah shall have a son" (9). Not only did God select Sarah's son Isaac, among all the children of Abraham, but he also made selection among the children of Isaac in a way that reveals most strikingly his general policy of proceeding by a method of apparently arbitrary selection. Before Isaac's wife Rebecca had given birth to their twins (10), when neither of the unborn children had had a chance to do anything good or evil, in order that God's purpose to introduce messianic salvation by a process of selection might be clearly established, in order that a place in the line leading to messianic salvation might not seem to be due to anything that any man had done but to be the result solely of the selective summons of God (11), he summoned one of these unborn children to a place of advantage over the other. Strangely enough he gave to the younger of the two control over the older (12). His decided choice of the one and rejection of the other stands clearly expressed in the statement made by Malachi about God's attitude toward the tribes that were founded by these twin brothers: 'Jacob I loved, Esau I hated.' Evidently God has in the same manner passed over the present generation of Jews (13)."

6. **The word of God**—promising messianic salvation to the nation (3: 1-3). The opposition of the present generation of Jews to the Jesus messianic movement is no proof that God's promise to the nation will not be fulfilled. **Not all Israel, which are of Israel.** Not all the descendants of the man Israel were in the nation Israel. (He mentions Israel before Abraham, because he has just spoken of Israelites). Therefore, the present generation of Jews could fail to receive messianic salvation without detriment to the faithfulness of God's word to the nation as a whole.

7. neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.
8. That is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed.
9. For this is a word of promise, According to this season will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.
10. And not only so; but Rebecca also having conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac—
11. for *the children* being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,

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7. Goes back of Israel to Abraham, the founder himself. Not all of his children were in the messianic line (Gen. 21: 12), any more than is the present generation.

8. Now a general principle is stated. It is not all offspring that are in the messianic line and so called "God's children." (Cf. 8: 14-17.) **Children of the flesh.** Children with whose coming God has no special connection. **Children of the promise.** Children born in fulfilment of God's promise. **Reckoned for a seed.** Perhaps a somewhat commercial or forensic word; formally entered as descendants in God's book of life, where those are listed who are to have the life of the Messianic Age.

10. **Not only so.** A more dramatic instance of procedure by selection follows.

11. **The purpose of God according to election.** The purpose to give messianic salvation to the nation and the world, a purpose that is accomplished by a process of selection. **Not of works.** A protest against an idea, current among some circles of Judaism, that a man could earn enough righteousness in the form of credits for acts of obedience to specific commandments in the law to put God under obligation to give him prominence and leadership in his messianic plan. God did not wait until Jacob could say: "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I get (Lk. 18: 12). I must be the one through whose seed messianic salvation shall come." **But of him that calleth.** The purpose was to spring solely out of the will of God. It is not asserted that God did not have some reason for willing as he did, but that reason was cer-



12. it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.
13. Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.

tainly not some demonstrated excellence on the part of Jacob, and apparently no foreseen excellence. Paul's point seems to be that God's plan to introduce the Messianic Age, to "save the world," does not veer and shift with the shifting conduct of men. The plan was formed antecedently to human conduct, and the agents through whom the plan was to be accomplished were selected on some other basis than their uncertain conduct. The plan eliminated Esau from the process and has also evidently eliminated the present generation of Jews, without in the least jeopardizing the final inclusion of the Jewish nation.

13. **Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.** A quotation from Mal. 1:2-3 in which the prophet ascribes to Jehovah, the God of his people, the traditional hatred felt by his people, or some portion of them, for their malicious neighbors. It is a strong oriental way of saying, God chose the descendants of Jacob to be his people, the bearers of the messianic hope, rather than the Edomites. No reason for the choice is given. Paul states later that the dominant motive in all God's messianic procedure was "mercy," "that he might have mercy on all" (11:32). The salvation of individual Edomites is not under discussion here, yet Paul would say that they suffered great disadvantage as individuals by not belonging to the chosen race (3:1-3). What became of these Edomites because the nation fell out of the process, is a question Paul never discusses. The evolutionary process is often considered to be wasteful of the individual organisms that fall out in the process. But who knows what becomes of them?

- (3) *Some Gentile Christians may say that to attribute such arbitrary discriminations to God is to charge him with unrighteousness, that if he had been planning to give messianic salvation to the Jewish nation he certainly would not have been so unfair as to pass over this generation. But such discriminations are not unrighteous, since the scriptures clearly attribute them to God (15-18), and no man has any right to question the conduct of God (19-26),*  
9:14-26.

"You Gentile Christians may say that to ascribe to God a policy of arbitrary selection, which discriminates between apparently equally eligible individuals in the same family or between generations in the same nation, is to find unrighteousness in him.



You say, perhaps, that if God were planning to give messianic salvation to the Jewish nation, as I maintain, he would certainly not have been so unfair as to reject this generation (14). But we must not for a moment think such discrimination on the part of God to be unrighteous, for the scripture unmistakably makes him assert his right to discriminate, and it therefore cannot be unrighteous to do so. Do you not remember that he said to Moses: 'I will show mercy to whomsoever I choose to show mercy, and I will pity whomsoever I choose to pity?' (15). This means that messianic salvation does not come to a man because he proudly wills that it shall, nor, as the misguided leaders of this generation of my countrymen suppose, because he violently exerts himself, like a runner on the race track, to accumulate credits in righteousness before God by obediences to law; it comes rather from the pitying God to such as get it (16). That God shows pity or not, according to his own pleasure, is perfectly evident from what scripture represents him as saying to Pharaoh: 'I have raised you up to your place of power among men for the purpose of treating you in such a way as to make an exhibition of my power, and of making my name known throughout the earth' (17). So, as I said, God pities whom he will just as he declared to Moses when he showed mercy to Moses and his people, and he 'hardens' whom he will as the scripture declares that he 'hardened' Pharaoh (18). I seem to hear you saying: 'Why then is the man blamed whose heart has been hardened? His hard heart is just what God willed it to be' (19). But O, frail man, who are you that assume the right to question the conduct of God? God made you, and the thing that God made certainly cannot question the right of its maker to make what he pleases (20)! Surely a potter has the right and the power to make just what he pleases out of his clay. Out of the same mass of clay he may make a part into a vessel for ornamental or noble use and another part into a vessel for plain or menial use (21). Why should anyone criticise God if he should even make prolonged exhibition of his purpose to choose one and reject another, as he did when he kept Pharaoh and Moses so long on the great world stage? Why should anyone object if God, although he was purposing finally to make exhibition of his wrath and power in his treatment of Pharaoh, a 'vessel' that he as the Great Potter had fitted to be destroyed in wrath, nevertheless, with forbearance kept him alive a good while, bringing plague after plague upon him (22), in order that he might have protracted opportunity to exhibit to all the world the riches of that 'glory' that Moses asked to see, glory that was manifested in his merciful treatment of Moses and his people who were 'vessels' of mercy whom God had mercifully prepared beforehand for the glory of his saving presence (23)? These people, the Jews

14. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.
15. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.

of Moses' day, God summoned to be his own people, for whom the salvation of the Messianic Age was destined; and among them we Christians of the present day take our place, not only such few Jews as are Christians, but you who are Gentiles whose ancestors had no standing among God's chosen people of old (24). God planned this of old, even when he was delivering the people through Moses and over-throwing Pharaoh. And we find him saying later through his servant Hosea the prophet, 'I will call those my people who have had no standing as my people and that nation my beloved which had not been loved, (25). Indeed on the very spot where it had been said to them, 'You are not my people,' there shall they be called 'sons of the living God,'—ready to inherit messianic salvation from their Father (26)."

14. **Is there unrighteousness with God?** This objection is conceived by Paul to come from Gentile Christians strongly anti-Jewish in feeling. To them the Jews are a perverse race whom God has, either now or long ago, expelled from the great messianic program. When Paul argues that the present perverse attitude of the nation is no indication as to what will finally become of it, that God has simply willed to pass by the present generation in the accomplishment of a plan that will ultimately save the nation, these Gentile Christians are quick to answer his argument by saying that any such apparently arbitrary discrimination against a single generation would be unrighteous. It would be far better to say, as they do, that the Jews are a perverse race and are getting what they deserve,—entire exclusion from the messianic plan.

15. **For he saith to Moses.** To represent God as proceeding by such a process of selection is not to attribute unrighteousness to him, for God himself asserts that he will so proceed, and therefore, Paul's inference is, to do so cannot be wrong. The quotation is from Ex. 33: 19, where God is showing Moses that the people have "found favor in his sight" (v. 16). According to the Hebrew, God makes his "goodness" pass before Moses, according to the LXX, his "glory" which involved goodness. So since God is showing forth goodness, or righteousness, when he makes this statement about having mercy upon whom he will, such discrimination cannot be considered unrighteousness. It is perhaps significant that in these quotations the nation is the object of mercy,

16. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy.
17. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, For this very purpose did I raise thee up, that I might shew in thee my power, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth.
18. So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth.

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which accords with the statement in Ex. 33:13 and also prepares the way for the statement in Rom. 11:29. **Mercy.** Perhaps sympathy manifesting itself in the act, and **compassion**, sympathy felt in the heart.

16. **So then.** Resumes the thought of v. 11 that God chooses his agents regardless of any righteousness they may accumulate by which to compel his choice. **Him that willeth.** Willeth to constrain God by human determination. **Runneth.** An athletic figure indicating violent exertion, frequently used to designate any vigorous course of action (I Cor. 9:24, 26; Gal. 2:2, 5:7; Phil. 2:16). Does Paul think that human effort avails at any point? The ethical portions of all his epistles enjoin strenuous effort upon believers and II Cor. 5:20 appeals to the "unreconciled." Perhaps the question of individual salvation is not primarily under discussion, but rather the assignment of a nation, a generation or an individual, to a place in the process of bringing messianic salvation to the world. If so, we confront the same mystery and have to leave it unsolved as Paul did. We do not see clearly why certain generations rather than others have produced great geniuses, or had unusual opportunities.

17. **For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh** (Ex. 9:16). Scripture is thought of as God's word. **For** correlates with the 'for' in v. 15, and introduces a second instance in which Paul's view of God is supported by scripture, this time not in showing mercy as in v. 15 but in withholding it. **Raise thee up.** The Hebrew reads "made thee to stand." The LXX reads "hast thou been preserved," that is, made to continue standing through all the previous plagues. Paul seems to understand the passage to mean "raised thee up" in history, and to say that God's motive in giving Pharaoh his place among men was to make in his treatment of him an exhibition of divine power.

18. **He hath mercy on whom he will**—on Moses and his nation. **Hardeneth.** The word is caught up from the context in Ex. 9:12.

19. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he still find fault? For who withstandeth his will?
20. Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst thou make me thus?
21. Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

We make various explanations of God's "hardening" Pharaoh's heart which lay the blame on Pharaoh (as the Exodus text also does 9:34) where we think it belongs, and exonerate God from apparent injustice. Paul felt no need of such explanations, as the next verse indicates. To him a statement in the scripture was the end of argument. Furthermore the majestic movement of God's merciful power, and its culmination in the glory of the New Age soon to dawn, were so vividly before his mind that he apparently had little trouble with what doubtless seemed to him minor details.

19. **Why doth he still find fault?** He wanted Pharaoh's heart to be hard and Pharaoh simply acquiesced in the will of God. There is incidental evidence that Paul has the viewpoint of Gentile Christians in mind here: Jews who held that God was against Gentiles, and could not naturally be expected to give them any chance to repent and be saved (Acts 11:18), would find no difficulty in God's treatment of a great "sinner of the Gentiles" (Gal. 2:15) like Pharaoh.

20. Paul candidly raises the question but he has practically no reply. He simply asserts that God has a right to do as he pleases and no one ought to question it.

21. **The potter.** There were potters everywhere and Paul's use of the figure was common. (Cf. Is. 29:16, 45:9-10, 64:8, Jer. 18:6.) **The same lump.** No difference in the material although very great differences in the character of the objects made out of it. **A vessel unto honor.** A vase or vessel for dignified household uses as contrasted with commonplace or menial uses. Paul seems to say here that God has a right to make out of a man either saint or sinner as he will. Yet he has earlier held (1:20, 2:1) that man is inexcusably to blame for his own sin; and he has also seemed to put the responsibility on an evil power other than man (7:17-20). Here he seems to mean that back of a man's sin is both the man's inexcusably wicked will and God's will.

22. What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction:
23. and that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory,

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This really logically makes God share the man's sin, and so be unrighteous, but this conclusion Paul cannot admit. He leaves the difficulty unexplained and contents himself with saying that God is surely righteous. If what God does seems to man to be unrighteous, man must admit that he does not know enough to criticise God. We may hold a view of the scriptures which removes part of the difficulty that Paul's viewpoint necessitated. But when we try to state to ourselves the relation of an immanent God to an evil human will, we find ourselves also confronted by an unsolved problem.

**22. Willing to show his wrath.** Marginal reading, *although* willing (i.e., purposing) to show his wrath. "The wrath" is often a technical term for the judgment day (5:9; I Thess. 1:10). A statement of the case more thoroughgoing than that in v. 21. God's action is not the quick decision of a potter, soon over and soon forgotten, but a deliberate action long drawn out, so that all the world may have ample time to realize clearly just what is happening. Here again it may be said (1) that Paul does not deny that God has a reason, although it is one that no man can understand, and (2) that God's ultimate purpose is a merciful one (11:32). **To show.** The same word used in the quotation from Exodus (v. 17). Paul has the case of Pharaoh in his mind. **Vessels of wrath.** The potter's figure again. Vessels upon whom he proposes to visit his wrath, namely Pharaoh and his agents. **Fitted unto destruction.** Apparently fitted by God for destruction, which seems to be the meaning of vs. 17-19 (cf. also "he prepared" v. 23). Destruction is not drowning in the Red Sea but destruction in the judgment day (cf. Phil. 3:19 where the same word occurs although translated "perdition"), because it is contrasted with "glory" (v. 23) which evidently refers to life in the Messianic Age.

**23. And.** Omitted in some MSS., in which case the following clause expresses the purpose of the verb "endured." If "and" be retained, the word "endured" is to be understood after it, so that the sense in either case is the same. **Glory.** The word is perhaps suggested by the case of Moses (v. 15) who was shown

24. *even* us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles?
25. As he saith also in Hosea, I will call that my people which was not my people; And her beloved, which was not beloved.
26. And it shall be, *that* in the place where it was said

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God's glory (Ex. 33:18-19), but the reference here is to the heavenly glory of the New Age.

24. **He called.** Paul is now in the full swing of Christian phraseology. All who become Christians Paul believes to have risen up in response to a constraining "call," or summons, of God. (8:30, I. Cor. 1:2, I Thess. 4:7). **Us.** Christians, not simply Moses and the Jewish bondmen of Pharaoh's day. Paul evidently does not interpret scripture with constraining sense of its historical meaning but directly applies its phraseology to the contemporary situation (cf. I Cor. 9:9-10). **Not from the Jews only**—as might have been expected since those whom God delivered from Pharaoh were Jews. Paul considers Jews to be still first in God's mind (1:16, 2:10-11), as will become evident to all in a few years (11:21, 24, 29).

25. Paul's Gentile readers will be comforted by realizing that scripture proves them to have been included in the group on whom God long ago willed to have mercy. Paul finds proof of this in Hos. 2:23. It is not an exact quotation from either the Hebrew or the LXX. Perhaps it may be the form in which he found it in some collection of quotations in use among Gentile Christians. (Harris, Sanday).

In the original context Hosea is not speaking of Gentiles but of the disobedient Ten Tribes, whose restoration to God's favor he predicts. Hosea had named his two children homiletically, the little girl "Lo-ruhamah" (Not-pitied), and the boy "Lo-ammi" (Not-my-people), so that they might be a constant sermon to the Ten Tribes, teaching them that they were the objects of God's displeasure. If Paul recognized the original application of the words, he may have used them to show that God takes into covenant relation with himself those who have not been sustaining such a relation to him, of which class Gentiles would be an illustration. The quotation is used, however, as if Paul thought it applied directly to Gentiles, and this would reflect the current idea if it was found in an existing collection of messianic prophecies.

26. A quotation from Hos. 1:10. The word "there" does not occur in Hosea. Perhaps it did occur in the form in which the



- unto them, Ye are not my people, There shall they be called sons of the living God.
27. And Isaiah crieth concerning Israel, If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that shall be saved:
28. for the Lord will execute *his* word upon the earth, finishing it and cutting it short.

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passage was quoted in the list of quotations from which it is conceivable Paul took it. Or it may be that to Paul's mind the word designates Palestine, which is the place referred to by Hosea (Sanday). If this be the case it perhaps incidentally implies Paul's eager hope that he may find hearty recognition of Gentile Christianity on the part of the Jewish Christians in Palestine whom he will soon visit (15: 25, 31).

- (4) *God's policy of selecting some and passing others by among the Jews appears, not only in the case of the patriarchal families, but later in Isaiah's time as well, 9: 27-29.*

"But as I said before, God has always been selecting some and rejecting others in his dealing with Israel. In Isaiah's day there was only a remnant that God proposed to save. Isaiah said: 'Even though the number should be as numerous as the seashore sand, it would still be only the remnant that would be saved (27). For God in his judgment will make a swift and decisive end of them' (28). And again, as Isaiah had said earlier in his prophecy: 'Unless the God of hosts had left us a little seed from which to make a new beginning, we should have disappeared from the face of the earth as utterly as Sodom and Gomorrah' (29)."

27-28. **Isaiah crieth.** Isaiah 10: 22 is speaking of the remnant that escaped from the king of Assyria. It seems impossible to suppose that Paul is quoting Isaiah to prove that very few Jews will ever be saved, because according to ch. 11 this is clearly not Paul's expectation. He is rather citing Isaiah to show that God's policy of proceeding by a method of selection in dealing with his people had reappeared in the prophet's time. In Isaiah's day there had been the passing over of some of the nation, just as in the case of the patriarchal families and in the case of the stubborn generation of Paul's contemporaries. Paul may also incidentally be thinking of the faithful "remnant" in Isaiah's day as like the faithful "remnant" found in the perverse generation of his own day (11: 5), but he is chiefly concerned with the great multitude of unbelieving Jews, like the "sand of the sea," found in Isaiah's



29. And, as Isaiah hath said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, We had become as Sodom, and had been made like unto Gomorrah.

2. *The present plight of the Jews is due to their obstinate and inexcusable refusal of faith-righteousness, 9: 30-10: 21.*

day and again in his own. **Finishing it and cutting it short.** Emphasizes the thoroughness and decisiveness of the process.

29. **Isaiah hath said before.** In an earlier part of his prophecy (1:9), showing that in his own time, just as in Paul's day, the people came near being as utterly destroyed as were Sodom and Gomorrah. If "said before" means "beforehand," then Paul holds that Isaiah predicted the terrible failure of Paul's own generation.

In 9:1-29 Paul has asserted that the generation now nearly ended had evidently been passed over by God in his process of introducing messianic salvation by a policy of selection. In 9:30-10:21 he argues that this generation (as well as all others similarly treated) is to blame for its rejection, and that its fault has consisted in the failure to have faith-righteousness. How it could be to blame for its failure when God had willed to pass it over, Paul does not explain. He has clearly recognized the difficulty and summarily dealt with it in 9:19-20. His chief concern is to propagate his own triumphant Christian experience, and he evidently feels no need of discussing the difficulty further.

While this whole section on the culpability of the Jews is primarily a part of Paul's effort to make Gentile Christians understand the Jewish situation, present predicament and hopeful prospect, he probably also hopes that what he says here may indirectly influence Jews. It is a part of the platform to which both Jews and Gentiles must be brought as they stand waiting for the Lord and the New Age.

(1) *Although the Jews have always seemed to be specialists in righteousness they have been outstripped in the sphere of their specialty by Gentiles. This is because they failed to seek the faith-righteousness that God reveals through Christ, 9: 30-10: 5.*

"What then is to be said regarding the respective relations of Jew and Gentile to messianic salvation? Simply that the Gentiles, who in their history and literature seem to have shown very little interest in righteousness, have, strangely enough, attained righteousness—but of course a righteousness that comes by faith (30). Israel, on the other hand, gave its zealous attention to the righteous law of Moses, but failed utterly to attain to

30. What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith:  
 31. but Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not arrive at *that* law.

the ideal of righteousness held up in the law (31). Why did they fail to live the righteous life that the law demanded? Because they did not adopt faith as their method, but instead set up an elaborate system of debits and credits for disobedient and obedient deeds. The crucified Christ who is the object of the faith-righteous man's faith seemed to them to be offensive (32). He was the veritable stone of 'stumbling' and 'rock of offense,' that Isaiah said would be set up by God in Zion to be the object of a faith that would secure a triumphant verdict of acquittal in the judgment day (33). Let me assure you again, my Gentile Brothers, that this sad situation of my countrymen appeals to me powerfully. That which would rejoice me above all else, and for which I am always making petition to God, is that my nation may soon be included in Jesus' messianic salvation (10:1). There is great reason for such desire. I can testify from my intimate acquaintance with them, and from my own experience before I began the life of faith, that they are busy in their attempt to do God's will. The trouble is that they have no clear perception of what God's will is (2). They ignore the faith-righteousness that God calls for, and insist on trying to use the law to establish a scheme of righteousness of their own devising. They do not subject themselves humbly to God and to his way of securing righteousness by having faith in Jesus Christ (3). A stop is put by Christ to this futile use of law as a means of gaining righteousness, whenever anyone becomes a man of faith (4). They might know that no mere excess of obediences over disobediences to the law could constitute righteousness, for Moses himself says that a man must do whatever the law commands if he would secure righteousness by means of it (5)."

9:30. **What shall we say then?** About the present situation in which Jews seem to have been passed over by God in favor of Gentiles. **The Gentiles.** Gentiles,—no article in Greek. Those who belong to the Gentile class. **Which followed not after righteousness.** Gentiles had not pressed on after righteousness, but nevertheless they laid hold of it as their prize (cf. Phil. 3: 12). It came into their hands purely through God's mercy—and of course it was God's kind of righteousness, faith-righteousness.

31. **A law of righteousness.** A law characterized by righteous-

32. Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by works. They stumbled at the stone of stumbling;
33. even as it is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence: And he that believeth on him shall not be put to shame.
10. Brethren, my heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved.

ness. Israel pursued not righteousness but a righteous law. Paul reiterates here the thought of 7: 12, which his Gentile readers need to heed, namely, that the ideal presented in the law is righteous. The trouble with the Jews, Paul would say, was that they were more interested in the details of the law than in its ideal. They made a wrong use of the law, and therefore **did not arrive at that law**, that is, they did not succeed in meeting the requirements of the righteous law. They did not arrive at its ideal.

32. **Because they sought it not by faith.** If they had entered into faith union with Christ they would have found themselves able to attain the righteous ideal of the law, namely, the life of love (13: 8-10). **By works.** See on 3: 28. **The stone of stumbling.** The famous stone of stumbling, apparently a common designation of Christ (cf. I Cor. 1: 23). He was meant to be the object of faith, leading to the faith-righteousness which the Jews failed to get.

33. A combination of Is. 28: 16 and 8: 14, where there are various readings in the LXX and other Greek translations. Part of the quotation recurs in 10: 11 and in I Pet. 2: 6, 8. The passage from Ps. 118: 22 speaking of a building "stone" rejected, also applied to Christ (Mk. 12: 10), was sometimes connected with this (I Pet. 2: 7). Very possibly the passages were in common use in some collection used by Christians as proof texts, and in this way fusion and variation in phraseology occurred. The general meaning here is clear enough. A stone of stumbling is a stone over which one stumbles and by which he might be kept from going on in the path. The Jews found such an obstacle in Jesus especially because of his crucifixion. A "rock of offense" as applied to Christ evidently has the same meaning, but it is not so easy to see what the figure is. In Isaiah the reference in both cases is directly to God.

10: 1. **My heart's desire.** The word translated desire means

2. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.
3. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.
4. For Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth.
5. For Moses writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby.

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good will or delight. As in 9:1-5 Paul protests against the false notion of many Gentile Christians that he has given up all hope or benevolent desire of messianic salvation for his nation. **My supplication to God is for them.** That is, for the nation, not for the generation just passing away which according to ch. 9 has been evidently passed over by God.

2. **I bear them witness.** As one who has seen the nation's devotion to the study of the law, and who remembers his own zeal when he was himself a devotee of the law (Gal. 1:14, Phil. 3:6). **Not according to knowledge.** Clear knowledge of God's will.

3. **God's righteousness.** See in 1:17. **Their own.** Something that they could claim as righteousness on the strength of credits for specific obediences. See on 3:20. They are like children who persist in trying to please a parent by doing the things he does not want done, and who refuse to recognize what he does want done.

4. **Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness.** "An end of law is Christ with reference to righteousness." Paul does not mean that obedience to the law was the means of securing righteousness until Christ appeared, for he has said in ch. 4 that none, not even Abraham and David, had righteousness by law. He means that this sort of futile effort to get righteousness by law, which he has been criticising in the Jews, ceases as soon as a man commits himself in faith to Jesus Christ.

5. **For.** Introduces a clause showing that the effort to secure law-righteousness, which ceases in the case of the believer, is indeed futile. Moses himself says (Lev. 18:5) that the man who would be righteous by law must do the law, that is, do it perfectly; and the implication is that of course no one succeeds in doing this.

6. But the righteousness which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down:)

(2) *Faith righteousness is in its nature so clear, simple, and close at hand, that the Jews are without excuse for having failed to understand and adopt it, 10: 6-13.*

"Righteousness by faith does not merely make a bare appeal to men to keep commandments. It presents rather the nearness of Christ and the strength of his gracious fellowship as the way to righteousness. We may use of it in this particular the eloquent language of Moses: 'Do not say in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven?'—that is, as we men of faith would say, to bring Christ down, for he is already with us (6). Or 'who shall go down into the abyss of the dead?'—that is, as we would say, to bring Christ up from the grave, for he is already at hand (7). Rather we may say, still using Moses' language: 'Near thee is the word, in thy very mouth and heart,' meaning by this the message regarding faith in the ever-present Christ that we are always preaching (8); namely, If you utter with your mouth the eager cry 'Lord Jesus,' and believe in your heart the truth pressing for control there—that God brought him up from the realm of the dead into the glory of the spirit world—you will be saved from condemnation in the judgment day (9). For it is with a 'heart' that one commits himself in faith to the control of Jesus, and so is pronounced righteous; and it is with a 'mouth' that one in unabashed confession calls Jesus Lord, and so is assured a place in the glorious life of the New Age (10). The scripture has assured us that no one who has this faith proclaimed in our message shall experience the shame of condemnation in the judgment day (11). The Scripture says 'no one,' and this includes not only Gentiles, but Jews as well, whom you Gentile Christians think God has cast off! The same Lord is the Lord of all, and rich in mercy to **all** who call upon him, Jews as well as Gentiles (12). 'Everyone who shall call upon him will be saved,' the scripture says. The message of faith is simple and near at hand, clearly intended for all. The unbelieving Jews are without excuse (13)."

6. **But the righteousness which is of faith.** Contrasted with the futile effort to secure law-righteousness by piling up creditable obediences to specific commandments, is righteousness by faith, which consists in the establishment of a loving personal relationship with Jesus as Lord (v. 9). The special point emphasized here is that faith-righteousness is simple and near at hand ("nigh thee" v. 8), because Christ the object of faith is close at hand. In

7. or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)
8. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach:
9. because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth

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making this point Paul takes words from Deut. 30:11-14 in which Moses set the law plainly before the people, and so adapts these words as to make them describe faith-righteousness and the object of faith, Jesus Christ. Did Paul recognize that Moses was urging upon the people strict obedience to all the commandments in God's law, and did he feel that he himself was urging upon his readers something different, in describing which he could nevertheless use Moses' language? Paul of course holds that God never supposed his law would be so obeyed as to lead to righteousness, and that he introduced it into the world simply to bring latent sin out to the surface (5:20, 7:7-13). Paul's theory of scripture would seem to require him to hold that Moses took the same view of the law, for it would seem unthinkable to Paul that Moses should misunderstand God at so vital a point. Therefore Paul would naturally understand Moses to be arguing directly for faith-righteousness in the Deuteronomy passage. He perhaps found direct evidence of this in the fact that Moses is urging upon the people and their seed a "circumcised (LXX 'thoroughly cleansed') heart" that will "love God with all the heart and soul," so as to "live" (Deut. 30:6). Since to Paul's own mind such love, fitting for "life" in the messianic kingdom, was the outcome and essence of faith-righteousness (Gal. 5:6, 13, 14, Rom 13:8-10), he could apply Moses' language directly to Christ without any sense of adding anything more than an obvious explanation of what seemed to him to be Moses' own thought.

7. **Who shall descend into the abyss?** The Deuteronomy passage reads: "Who shall cross over the sea?" "Descend into the abyss" is a better antithesis to "ascend into heaven," and is used of the ship going down into the trough of the waves Ps. 107:26. Here it refers to the abode of the dead (cf. Ps. 71:20).

8. **The word of faith.** The message about faith and faith-righteousness which is the central theme of Paul's gospel (1:16-17).

9. **Because.** Better "that," or "namely," introducing the simplest form in which Paul ever states the content of his gospel of faith-righteousness. The belief of the heart would come



Jesus *as* Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved:

10. for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
11. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame.
12. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek:

logically before confession with the mouth, but the order is determined by the quotation: "in thy mouth and in thy heart" (v. 8). **Jesus as Lord.** Literally "Lord Jesus." This use of the title "Lord" was commonly understood to designate one worshipped e.g., "My Lord Serapis." "No one speaking in God's Spirit can say 'Anathema Jesus'; and no one can say 'Lord Jesus' except in the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12: 3). See on I: 4. **God raised him from the dead.** By being raised from the dead he is introduced into the spirit world, the realm in which he is to act as messianic "Lord." He is brought up into the realm of the living, where men may in spirit find him and call him "Lord."

10. **Believeth unto righteousness.** Breaking away from the influence of the quotation Paul presents the two acts in their more logical order. Believing "with a heart" that Jesus was raised from the dead involves believing him to be "Lord," otherwise "a mouth" could not confess. The two actions of course are not really separable but are spoken of as separate because of the language used in the quotation. Righteousness and salvation are also practically inseparable. Righteousness, or the pronouncement of acquittal in the judgment day, leaves the acquitted free to enter into the life of the Messianic Age that follows the judgment and that is called "the salvation." See on I: 16.

11. **Shall not be put to shame.** By being condemned in the judgment day and failing to enter into "the salvation." A quotation from Is. 28: 16 according to the LXX. The Hebrew reads "shall not be in haste," shall not hasten away, fleeing in shame from the face of God.

12. **For there is no distinction.** Explains "whosoever" in v. 11. Here it is the Jew whose standing with God has been called in question by the Gentile.



for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that call upon him:

13. for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.
14. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in

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13. **Whosoever.** Gives the reason for the word "all" in v. 12. Quotation from Joel 2: 32. In the original context the judgment day "the great and terrible day of Jehovah" is represented as at hand.

- (3) *The Jews cannot excuse themselves by saying that the message about faith failed to reach them for it has been widely published, 10: 14-18.*

"It is of course natural to say that if men are to call upon the Lord Jesus, as I have just urged, they must first have believed in him; and that this they cannot do if they have not first heard him speaking through his messengers; and that they cannot hear him if there be no preacher ready to be his voice (14); and that there can be no preachers unless preachers are sent forth by God. And welcome messengers ought they to be whose swift feet, as they come running with good news for men in distress, should seem beautiful, as they did in Isaiah's day (15)! But the sad fact is that the Jews did not welcome and obey this glad message of faith-righteousness. We can say of our day just what Isaiah said of the countrymen to whom he brought good news: 'Lord where is the man that has believed it!' (16). It is true then, as I was saying, that you must hear before you believe, and that there must first of all be a word about Christ for you to believe (17). But can the Jews say in excuse of themselves that they have not heard? Certainly not, for the proclamation of the Gospel of faith by Christ's preachers has been as world wide as the proclamation of God's goodness by the glorious heavens, of which the Psalmist speaks. Its resounding note has been heard in all the earth. It has gone to every Jewish colony (18)."

14-15. In this rapid series of questions Paul presents the various excuses that might conceivably be made for the failure of this perverse generation of Jews to secure faith-righteousness. The questions culminate in the suggestion that possibly no one has been sent to them. One is tempted to think that there is in the background of Paul's mind the case of the Spaniards who are to be the objects of his next great missionary endeavor (15: 19-28), and that he is thinking of receiving from the Roman church

him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15. and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!
16. But they did not all hearken to the glad tidings. For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?
17. So belief *cometh* of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
18. But I say, Did they not hear? Yea, verily, Their sound went out into all the earth, And their words unto the ends of the world.

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such help for his Spanish mission as the Antioch church had given him in his earlier missionary work. However the main idea in these questions is rather that the whole process of salvation must run back to God as its instigator. The sending out of preachers by God originates the movement (cf. Gal. 1: 15-16). This is in accord with the whole trend of thought in ch. 9 which rests every thing on the gracious will of God. The thought then is, Did God send this perverse generation no preachers and are they therefore excusable? **Whom they have not heard**—Christ in the person of his messengers. **How beautiful are the feet.** A quotation (Is. 52:7) in which the welcome accorded to the messengers shows how necessary they are. The swiftly running feet that have brought them seem beautiful.

16. **But they did not all hearken.** The situation in Isaiah's day, when God passed over many, has been alluded to before (9: 27, 29). Here Isaiah, whose allusion to messengers has just been cited, says that the lack of "belief," or "faith," on the part of his contemporaries made them inexcusable, just as has been the case with the perverse generation in Paul's day (9: 32).

17. A summary of the essentials—a message, hearing it, believing it. **By the word of Christ.** Through or in the word about Christ (cf. v. 8 "word of faith") is found the message. Or the word of Christ may be the word which Christ speaks in the person of his preachers (cf. v. 14).

18. They surely had a chance to hear the message for its preaching has been as widespread as the declaration of God's

19. But I say, Did Israel not know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation, With a nation void of understanding will I anger you.

20. And Isaiah is very bold, and saith, I was found of

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goodness by the far stretching heavens, that is, it has covered the earth (Ps. 19:4). It is implied that the Christian message had been carried widely to the Jews. The extensiveness of Paul's work among the Gentiles is emphasized in 15: 18-19 (cf. 1: 8, Col 1: 6). The work of the other apostles (cf. Gal. 2: 7-8) had probably been as far reaching among Jews scattered over the empire (cf. 1 Peter 1: 1).

(4) *The Jews cannot say in excuse that they were not adequately warned of their danger. Both Moses and Isaiah warned them, 10: 19-21.*

"I say further, it is not true, is it, that Israel had no chance to know that messianic salvation might slip from them into other hands? Certainly not. In the first place Moses represents God as saying: 'I will use what you regard as no nation—Gentiles—to provoke you to a jealous desire for the gospel. I will use people that you regard as spiritually stupid to anger you into appreciation of your privilege' (19). Later Isaiah with great boldness delivered the unpopular message which announced that Gentiles were to be given Jewish prerogatives: 'I was found by those who had not been seeking me, and was made known to those who had not been inquiring for me' (20). But with reference to Israel he says: 'All day long I stretched out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.' They certainly have had ample warning that Gentiles might supplant them in their chief privilege, although the results of the warning have not been great as yet (21)."

19. Did Israel not know? Know what? Possibly, know the meaning of the message about faith, in which case the following verses are understood to emphasize the fact that, since Gentiles understood the message, certainly it must have been intelligible to Jews. But more probably, that which Israel did not know was its danger, or that Gentiles would outstrip Jews, the thought with which the section began (9: 30-31) and the thought which is emphasized in the reply here. **Moses saith.** Moses foretold the competition (Deut. 32: 21).

20-21. **Isaiah is very bold.** Boldly delivered to his people the unpopular message that there would be Gentiles who would

them that sought me not; I became manifest unto them that asked not of me.

21. But as to Israel he saith, All the day long did I spread out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

3. *Gentile Christians must never make the proud assumption that God has cast off his ancient people and transferred his favor to themselves. The Jewish nation will soon join the Gentiles in accepting messianic salvation. Their present bad situation is simply a step in the accomplishment of God's great plan to deal mercifully with all the human race, II: 1-32.*

find God, and Israelites who would turn from him. The quotations are from Is. 65: 1-2. The prophet seems to be speaking not about Gentiles but about Jews.

(1) *Gentile Christians must not say that God has discarded his people. Paul himself and Jewish Christians scattered here and there over the empire are proof to the contrary, to say nothing of the impossibility that God's ancient choice of the nation should ever be revoked, II: 1-6.*

"You Gentile Christians cannot think, can you, that God who so patiently held out hands of invitation to his people (10: 21) has with those same hands pushed them off from himself forever! I, whose pure Jewish blood no man may question, am myself proof that he has not. He would not have given to a member of a cast-off race the unique position of leadership in the messianic movement that his grace has assigned to me (1). How can you attribute to God the unthinkable inconsistency of casting off a nation which he had once clearly set before himself for glorification in the Messianic Age! Or if you think that I stand practically alone, and that I alone am not sufficient to prove God's continuing regard for my nation, remember the situation in Elijah's day. He thought that he was alone and actually turned against his people in prayer to God, as some of you seem to imagine that I have done (2). He accused them before God of killing the prophets and digging up the foundations of the holy al-

11. I say then, Did God cast off his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.
2. God did not cast off his people which he foreknew.

tars. He felt that he stood absolutely alone and that his countrymen were bent on killing him. How much there is indeed in my situation that resembles his (3)! But what was God's solemn answer to his prayer? 'I have seven thousand faithful worshippers among the people who have never bowed before the unmentionable Shame!' (4). In this particular the present situation resembles that of Elijah's time, for scattered here and there are Christian Jews, a faithful remnant, the result of God's purpose to proceed by a policy of merciful selection (5). Let no one forget for a moment that the existence of the remnant is due to God's unbought mercy. It has not come into existence through any credits in righteousness accumulated by valuable deeds. If it had, God's merciful disposition would have no chance to express itself in merciful action (6)."

1. **Cast off.** "Push off," contrasted with hands stretched out to them in invitation (10:21). The language suggests Ps. 94: 14 and I Sam. 12: 22 where the same Greek word is used in the LXX. **I also am an Israelite.** On Israelite see on 9: 4. Paul, fully conscious of the high position assigned to him by God (Gal. 1: 1, 15) in preparing the world for messianic salvation, is a full blooded Jew whose pedigree in the tribe of Benjamin is clearly established (cf. Phil. 3: 5). Perhaps Gentile Christians were sometimes eager to suggest that Paul was not really a full blooded Jew. If God had cast off the nation he would certainly not have shown such conspicuous honor to one of its members. Paul allowed no false delicacy to obscure a proper sense of the importance of his own position, but this sense was coupled with due humility (I Cor. 15: 8-10).

2. **His people which he foreknew.** A second proof that God has not cast off his people is the fact that he "foreknew" them, and foreknowing is the first step in the process that leads to glorification in the Messianic Age (8: 29). The evidence that he "foreknew" them is not given here but is later seen to be the promises made by God to the fathers (vs. 16, 28, 29). Paul simply mentions the point here in passing and proceeds to a third proof, logically related to his first point. Not only is he himself an evidence that God has not discarded Jews but so are the little band of his Jewish fellow Christians—like the faithful seven thousand in Elijah's day (vs. 4-5). **What the Scripture saith of**

- Or wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elijah? how he pleadeth with God against Israel,
3. Lord, they have killed thy prophets, they have digged down thine altars: and I am left alone, and they seek my life.
  4. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have left for myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal.
  5. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.
  - 6 But if it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.

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**Elijah.** Or "in Elijah," that is, in the Elijah section or history. The situation of Elijah had evidently appealed to Paul. They were seeking Elijah's life just as Paul at this very time was in daily danger of assassination (15: 31, Acts 20: 3, 23: 12-13, cf. I Cor. 15: 30-31). Elijah seemed "left alone" as Paul may have been sometimes tempted to think that he himself was. Elijah made the same case against his countrymen that Paul sometimes did (cf. I Thess. 2: 14-16). Vital religion seemed to have died out in the nation—prophets "killed off" and altars "dug up."

4. **But what saith the answer of God.** Paul had evidently often read with comfort the story of Elijah. God was not discouraged. He knew of seven thousand faithful worshipers. "Baal" is preceded by the feminine article in the Greek, perhaps because the feminine word meaning "shame" was spoken by the rabbis in reading instead of the repugnant heathen word "Baal," and so the feminine article was commonly used as appropriate to the unwritten word actually spoken.

5. **At this present time also there is a remnant.** The existence of this Christian remnant proves that God has not abandoned the nation. In Elijah's day the nation survived the crisis and better times came. Later in the chapter Paul will express his assurance that the nation as a whole will survive the present dark crisis and experience messianic salvation. **According to the election of grace.** Reverts to the thought of 9: 6-11. This remnant owes its existence to God's policy of bestowing messianic salvation by a process of selection that springs out of his unbought mercy.

6. **If it is by grace it is no more of works.** Paul feels the need



7. What then? That which Israel seeketh for, that he obtained not; but the election obtained it, and the rest were hardened:
8. according as it is written, God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day.

of insisting here again as in 9: 30-10: 5 that this remnant is sharply and vitally differentiated from the great mass of the nation. They are not trying to accumulate righteousness by carefully calculated obediences to specific commandments. **Otherwise grace is no more grace.** If they were, there would be no chance for the exercise of kindness. There would be only the cold payment of a just debt.

- (2) *What has happened is that a few of us, in accordance with God's policy of selection, have obtained messianic salvation; but the rest of the nation have been hardened as both Isaiah and David represented, 11: 7-10.*

"What then is the situation in Israel? The righteousness that the mass of the nation sought with such unintelligent zeal they did not find. But the believing remnant, the product of God's policy of merciful selection, has obtained it. The mass of the nation received the hard heart (7) just as we read in Isaiah: 'God gave them a torpid spirit, blinded eyes and deafened ears to this very day' (8). David also speaks for God when he said: 'As they sit in luxurious security at their feasts may they suddenly find themselves snared and trapped, overthrown and judged, their eyes darkened into sightlessness and their backs bent under their captors' burdens.'

7. **What then?** The reference to "grace" and "works" in v. 6 starts Paul again for a moment on the theme he discussed at greater length in chs. 9-10. What he said there, when comparing believing Gentiles with unbelieving Jews, he can repeat here about the believing Jewish remnant and the unbelieving nation. Israel as a nation in Paul's day has not received the messianic salvation that it sought so earnestly (cf. 10: 1-5). But a small number whom God in mercy "selected" have received it. **The rest were hardened.** Presumably by God, as the next verse states, and as Paul asserted in 9: 18.

8. **As it is written.** Loose quotation from Is. 29: 10 and Deut. 29: 4, where God is said to have made Israel hard of heart and



9. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare,  
and a trap, And a stumbling block, and a recompense unto them:
10. Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see  
And bow thou down their back alway.

slow of understanding. These two passages may have stood together in some collection of texts used by Christian preachers.

9-10. **David saith.** Quotation from Ps. 69:22-23, a Psalm containing terrible imprecations upon the Psalmist's enemies, whom Paul evidently considers to be the Jewish people. Cf. 3:10-18. Their time of secure enjoyment and feasting is to be the time of their undoing, when they are trapped, hunted down and get their deserts. Ps. 69 seems to have influenced the New Testament account of the death of Jesus (cf. v. 25 with Acts 1:20; v. 21 with Matt. 27:34).

This language sounds more severe than 10:2-3. Perhaps Paul was thinking here of the more vicious of his antagonists, those dealt with in II Cor. 11:13-15 and I Thess. 2:14-16, while in 10:2-5 he was thinking of his kinsmen and old rabbinic associates.

- (3) *God's purpose in producing the apostasy of this perverse generation was to bring the message of messianic salvation effectively to the Gentiles, and in such a way as to provoke in the Jews a real appreciation of it. When the Jews in their turn also accept it the world will experience no less a blessing than the resurrection from the dead and the dawn of the Messianic Age, 11:11-16.*

"Do I mean to say that when God caused the nation to stumble he meant it never to rise again? No indeed! Something very different and divinely merciful God purposes. When they fell away from Jesus' messianic movement it no longer seemed to the Gentiles to bear the stigma of the Jew, and the Gentile seized it eagerly. When the Jew sees his glorious possession in the hands of the Gentile he in turn will be seized with a jealous desire to claim his own (11). If the Jews' falling away into transgression could bring a rich possession to the whole Gentile world, if the lessening of Jewish advantage could bring richness of blessing to all the Gentiles, how much more will Jewish fulness of advantage bring blessing to the world (12)? I am writing to Gentiles. Let me tell you Gentiles then what the impelling motive behind

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- II. I say then, Did they stumble that they might fall?  
 God forbid: but by their fall salvation *is come*  
 unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.
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my apostolic mission to you is, and tell you with such frankness that I shall never again be suspected by you of anti-Jewish prejudice. I am always glorifying my apostolic mission to you (13) because I hope in this way to arouse in my kinsmen jealous desire for the Gospel and so to draw some of them into the messianic salvation that will come so soon as the Jews are ready (14). For if, as I said, their temporary exclusion from the messianic movement could result in a reconciliation of a whole Gentile world, what will their inclusion in the movement result in except a general resurrection from the dead and the dawning of the New Age (15)? There is every reason to expect that the nation will be included in the messianic movement, for when God accepted the Fathers he accepted the whole nation of which the Fathers are a part, just as his acceptance of the 'first loaves' means his acceptance of all the mass of dough from which these loaves were taken. The Fathers were in God's sight a holy root which communicates its nature to all the branches (16)."

11. **Did they stumble.** Over the stumbling block (v. 9). **That they might fall.** Was God's purpose in causing them to stumble simply to experience cold blooded delight in seeing them fall and be permanently out of the race? **By their fall.** The word translated fall means a culpable falling out of the way and is generally translated "transgression" (e.g., 4: 25; 5: 15, 16, 17, 18, 20). **Salvation is come unto the Gentiles.** Paul implies that the Gentiles would never in large numbers have accepted the message of messianic salvation if it had come to them as a thoroughly Jewish movement. Prejudice against Jews was so strong in the Greco-Roman world that no movement avowedly Jewish could ever hope to subdue the world. As an apostle to the Gentiles Paul regarded Jewish opposition as a distinct advantage. **To provoke them to jealousy.** To provoke the Jews to jealousy. As Paul will say in a moment, it is inconceivable that God should produce anything more than a temporary Jewish opposition to the messianic movement. He will pass over some generations in his process of selection, but he will never permanently abandon the nation. When the Jews see how great a blessing the messianic movement in the hands of the Gentiles is, they will be provoked to desire their own and will come to it eagerly.

12. Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?
13. But I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry:
14. if by any means I may provoke to jealousy *them that are* my flesh, and may save some of them.
15. For if the casting away of them *is* the reconciling

12. **Their fall is the riches of the world.** Their falling away from the messianic movement of Jesus has made it acceptable to Gentiles by relieving it from the stigma of being Jewish, and so has brought rich blessing to the Gentile world. **How much more their fulness.** The word translated "fulness" might mean "fulfilling," that is, their fulfilling the will of God. More probably it means their fulness of blessing through acceptance of the messianic message, and so stands in contrast with their "lessening" or "loss."

13-14. **I speak to you that are Gentiles.** "I realize that I am writing to Gentiles." Therefore Paul will take advantage of this fact and make a startling statement that will keep Gentile Christians from ever again making the mistake of which he has previously warned them, namely, the mistake of supposing that he shares their anti-Jewish prejudice. A great part of his interest in his apostolic mission to the Gentiles is due to the chance that mission gives him to bring blessing to his countrymen! The larger and more conspicuous his success among the Gentiles, the more effective will he be in arousing among his beloved countrymen jealous interest in the Jesus messianic movement. **Save some of them.** This may mean some even of this perverse generation, or it may indicate that Paul's expectation of salvation for the nation did not involve expectation that all Jews would accept the Jesus message, any more than it involved expectation that all Gentiles the world over would do so. The word "some" in Paul's use does not necessarily mean "a few" or even "a large minority." In I Cor 9: 22 the expression "that I might save some" is used to describe the whole outcome of his apostolic work among all classes, an outcome which he by no means regarded as meagre.

15. **The casting away.** Their present alienation from the

of the world, what *shall* the receiving of *them* be, but life from the dead?

16. And if the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump: and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

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Jesus messianic movement. **The reconciling of the world.** "A reconciling of a world," a reconciliation of a whole Gentile world to God. **Life from the dead.** When God temporarily set the Jews one side the result was a great good, so when he takes them back, it is argued, the result will be life from the dead which, according to the "how much more" of v. 12, must be a greater good. What is it that would be a greater good than the reconciliation of the Gentile world? Possibly the restoration to divine favor of God's ancient people, regarded as a blessing so inconceivably great as to be nothing less than a change from death to life (Denney). More probably "a life from the dead" is the resurrection of the dead, which will introduce the new Messianic Age. It is this consummation that is the goal of all Paul's thought, the redemption of the body toward which everything is looking with intense longing (8:18-23). It is extremely improbable that Paul would omit all mention of this in the sketch of God's great world plan that he is giving here. Yet it is omitted unless it be found at this point. When Jew and Gentile stand together before God in penitent faith, the Lord will come from heaven to introduce the New Age by a resurrection of the dead. The Talmud says that the lack of repentance prevents the dawning of the New Age. "If all Israel would repent together for one day, redemption through the Messiah would be the result" (Weber). That this idea prevailed in at least certain circles of early Christians is evident from Acts 3:19-20.

16. **If the first fruit is holy so is the lump.** The first fruit here is the small portion of dough taken from the whole mass, or "lump," and offered to God (Num. 15:17-21). His acceptance of it as something holy shows that he approves and accepts the whole. In Paul's application of the figure the first fruits are "the fathers" (v. 28), the patriarchs whom God accepted. Paul argues that in accepting them God committed himself to the acceptance of the nation of which they were the beginning. He did not of course forego the right to proceed by a process of "selection" in the case of particular generations, but he did make it evident that he would never abandon the nation. **Root—branches.** The same idea expressed by another figure. The root represents the fathers, and the branches the nation that sprang from them.

- (4) *Gentile Christians must lay aside their Anti-Jewish race pride, and recognize the fact that the Jews have been the objects of God's special care and are more evidently eligible to messianic salvation than are Gentiles. They will soon be gathered with Gentiles into the experience of God's messianic mercies, 11: 17-32.*

"Let me use an illustration that will show you what the relation of Gentile Christians to the Jewish people really is. I have just mentioned the relation of root to branches. Suppose that a farmer should ever do so absurd a thing as to break off branches from a tame olive tree in his orchard and graft in wild olive cuttings! Now you Gentile Christians are just such a wild olive slip grafted into the Jewish nation that is like a fine tame olive. You are now sharing with the Jewish tame olive branches the rich sap of the splendid Jewish root and stock (17). Certainly you, a little wild olive cutting, will not do so absurd a thing as to glory over these tame branches! You will not be so conceited as to feel that you are giving strength to the root and to forget that it is the root that strengthens you! (18). Probably you will say, as I have often heard men say when I have used this illustration: 'I may be a wild olive cutting but nevertheless it has to be admitted that God valued me more highly than he did the tame branches, for he broke them off to make a place for me (19)!' How beautifully you put it! But not quite true to the facts. They were broken off because they refused to have faith, and you are where you are because you did have faith. So do not be conceited but be full of fear (20), for there is much less reason for God's sparing you than for his sparing the branches that naturally belonged where you are (21). We have then here a case of God's kindness and sharpness,—to the branches that fell, sharpness; but toward you kindness, if you continue to be fit for kindness. If you do not you will certainly be cut off (22)! And on the other hand they, if they do not persist in their fatal lack of faith, will certainly be grafted in. God could easily do it (23). For if so unnatural a thing as grafting you, a slip from a wild olive, into a tame olive could take place, how much more easily could it happen that Jews, who are tame olive branches, should be grafted back into their own tree where they naturally belong (24). I want you to be initiated, my Brothers, into a wondrous secret that has long lain in the mind of God and has now been revealed to those who have spiritual understanding. When you once understand this secret you will be kept from conceit. A hardening of the heart has to a certain extent befallen Israel, and is destined to continue until the Gentile world shall yield its generous quota to the Jesus messianic movement (25). Then the Jewish people as a whole will join the messianic movement and

17. But if some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wast grafted in among them, and didst become partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree;

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usher in the New Era of Salvation. This is what is foretold in the scripture that says: 'There shall come forth from Zion the messianic Deliverer who will turn away ungodliness from Jacob (26). This is my solemn covenant with them, to be certainly fulfilled at the time when I shall take away their sins (27).' So the situation is this: When we look at the way the Jesus messianic movement is spreading over the earth, the Jews appear to be enemies, for they have been excluded from it in order that you might thereby reap the great advantage of participation in it. But when we look at God's ancient policy of introducing messianic salvation by a process of selection, we see that the nation is very dear to God, for he selected the fathers and promised them that their descendants should have messianic salvation (28). This salvation the nation surely will have, for the gift that God once bestows, and the summons that he once issues, will never be regretted and recalled (29). So just as you Gentiles, who used to be disobedient to God, have been providentially won to obedience and the experience of God's mercy more effectively because of their temporary disobedience (30), so they have been put through a course of disobedience like yours, not that it should become permanent but that they, moved by the mercy they see you enjoying, may themselves also seek and receive mercy. So both Jews and Gentiles shall finally have run exactly the same course (31). God shut them all up in the pen of the disobedient, not for slaughter in the day of judgment, but that he might with wondrous grace look upon them all in mercy and lead them out into messianic glory (32)."

17. Paul here takes up the figure of root and branches and uses it, as he had perhaps often done, to check the supercilious anti-Jewish spirit of Gentile Christians. The Gentile Christians were like useless wild olive cuttings, grafted into the tree in place of good tame olive branches that had been broken off, a process which would seem wholly foolish. The figure cannot be pressed to details, to inquire for instance what kind of fruit would be the result of such a process. It is simply a way of saying that the Gentiles, who were inferior to the Jews, had nevertheless been made participators in the superior privileges of the splendid Jewish stock, had been given the undeserved advantage of con-



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18. glory not over the branches: but if thou gloriest, it is not thou that bearest the root, but the root thee.
19. Thou wilt say then, Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.
20. Well; by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by thy faith. Be not high minded, but fear:
21. for if God spared not the natural branches, neither will he spare thee.
22. Behold then the goodness and severity of God: toward them that fell, severity; but toward thee, God's goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.
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nection with all that God had richly granted to the "Fathers" and their descendants (cf. 9: 1-5).

**18. Glory not over the branches.** This shows the point and purpose of the discussion and is repeated in vs. 20, 25. For the Gentile Christian to feel superior to the Jew, and to feel that he had displaced the Jew as a recipient of the messianic favor of God, was as absurd as it would be for a little wild olive cutting to feel superior to the great tame olive root that was furnishing it life!

**19-21. Thou wilt say.** Perhaps Paul, on occasions when he had used this figure before, had heard Gentile Christians reply that although they were wild olive cuttings, God had certainly broken off branches in order to make place for them. Paul says that God had not done exactly this, at least that he had not meant Gentiles permanently to displace Jews. He had meant to punish Jews for unbelief and to reward Gentiles for that belief, the humble maintenance of which is their only hope of holding their place. Well. Perhaps ironical as in Mk. 7: 9. "Beautifully said!"

**22. Toward them that fell.** Goes back to the idea of falling in v. 11. **Severity.** Sharpness. Perhaps Paul has a play on words in mind for the Greek word suggests a "cutting off," such as the branches had experienced.



23. And they also, if they continue not in their unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.
24. For if thou wast cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which are the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree?
25. For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in;
26. and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

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23-24. Paul is not concerned about the artistic details of his figure. The branches that were broken off and thrown away to make place for wild olive cuttings are spoken of as if they had not withered, and could still be used as small cuttings. The point to be made however is perfectly clear—the unbelieving nation can be reclaimed. To restore religiously cultured Jews would be easier than to make something of raw Gentiles as God had done!

25-27. Summary of the thought with emphasis of the warning against anti-Jewish pride. **Mystery.** Not necessarily anything hard to understand, but a "secret," and here a secret that has long lain concealed in the mind of God (cf. Col. 1: 26) but is now brought to light. It is brought to light by the logic of events and through the spiritual illumination which Paul feels has been given him by God to enable him to see the logic of events (cf. I Cor. 7: 40). **In part.** It has not affected the entire nation either past or present (vs. 1-5), and the future is full of hope. **Fulness of the Gentiles.** Either the large majority of the Gentile population of the world or the full measure of those whom God plans to save. Probably the former, for in v. 12 the same word designated a large body of Jews as contrasted with a small minority like the "seven thousand." **And so all Israel shall be saved.** That is, afterward, provoked by the example of the Gentiles, all Israel shall be

27. And this is my covenant unto them, When I shall take away their sins.
28. As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake.
29. For the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance.
30. For as ye in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by their disobedience,
31. even so have these also now been disobedient, that by the mercy shewn to you they also may now obtain mercy.

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saved, as in vs. 11-12. "All Israel" is sometimes said to designate all true believers whether Jew or Gentile, but decisively opposed to this interpretation is the fact that Gentiles and Jews are the subject of the whole discussion. Also in the quotation "Jacob" clearly designates the Jewish nation, and the words "they" and "you" in vs. 28-30 clearly contrast Jews and Gentiles. The quotation merges Is. 59:20 and 27:9, both of which refer to Jacob. Paul understands the "Deliverer" to be the Messiah.

28. **As touching the gospel.** Looked at from the standpoint of the present extension of the gospel messianic movement they are being treated like God's enemies, that is, they seem to be excluded from it. **For your sake.** In order to make it easy for you Gentiles to identify yourselves with the gospel. See on v. 11. **As touching the election.** Looked at from the standpoint of God's original selection of the Jewish nation to be his people, they will soon accept messianic salvation and appear as his beloved. **For the fathers' sake.** So as to secure for the fathers the holy nation God promised them their descendants should constitute.

29. **The gifts and the calling of God.** God gave the fathers the promise that their descendants should be his people. He called, or summoned, them and their descendants into messianic glory. This promise and summons can never fail of the fulfilment God led the fathers to expect.

30-31. See on v. 11.

32. For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all.

4. *Everlasting glory be to God! God's plan for finally bringing both Jew and Gentile, so long antagonistic, mercifully up out of sin into the righteousness and glory of the Messianic Age shows a profound wealth of skill and knowledge. No one without divine illumination could have discovered beforehand what his decisions meant or could have traced his paths to their goal, 11: 33-36.*

32. God let them all, Jew and Gentile, become disobedient not because he wanted to punish but because he wanted to show mercy. The desire to be merciful was always dominant. **Mercy upon all.** Evidently Paul did not mean upon all who had ever lived, for he had drawn the dark picture in 1: 18-32 and saw the fate of the lost (Phil. 3: 19). He is talking about the New Age (5: 12-20), which will include the Jewish nation as well as Gentiles. He seems nowhere to consider the fate of the multitudes of disobedient Gentiles and Jews who had lived and died in past centuries.

"What unlimited abundance of resources, wise device and un-failing insight has God possessed in the long history of mankind that soon shall issue in the New Age! How impossible it has been for men to search out the reasons for his decrees and to trace the paths on which he has moved forward to their accomplishment (33). Surely the scripture may say: 'Who among men has been able to see what lay in the mind of God or to counsel him about his actions?' (34). 'Who has been able to put him under obligation so as to demand recompense either for counsel or for righteous action?' (35). All rest on him; he rests on none other, for all things proceed from him as source, through him are maintained in being, and in his uses find the reason for their being. Amen (36)!"

Another outbreak of praise like those in ch. 5 and 8: 31-39. It is hard for us to realize the deep feeling that would rise in the heart of a Christian Jew like Paul over the problem that the condition of his nation presented and over the satisfactory solution of the problem that he had discovered. If the Anglo-

33. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past tracing out!
34. For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?
35. or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?
36. For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him *be* the glory for ever. Amen.

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Saxon race all over the world should abandon Christianity within the next few generations and the African races should adopt it, we can imagine how a Christian member of the Anglo-Saxon race would feel over the situation. We can in some measure imagine also the profound joy that he would experience, if he should discover what seemed to him a divine purpose running through the process, destined to issue speedily in a wonderful Federation of the World under the leadership of Jesus Christ!

33. **O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!** Literally "O depth of riches and wisdom and knowledge." **Riches**—vast resources and fulness of the "glory" of the spiritual world (cf. v. 12); **wisdom**—skill and prudence in the exercise of goodness; **knowledge**—the direct perception of what is, what ought to be and what shall be. **His judgments.** Not his "condemnations" but his decrees or decisions, if the next clause may be regarded as constituting a parallel. Paul is commenting on God's whole policy of dealing with the human race, which has just been under discussion.

34. From Is. 40: 13. God's plan was too wise to have been devised by any other than God alone, and he needed no helper.

35. From the Hebrew of Job 41: 11 which differs from the LXX. God is indebted to no one for his wisdom and knowledge. Perhaps also a final thrust at those who seek righteousness by works, and who would so put God under obligation to them.

12:1 IV. DIRECTIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF THOSE WHO  
IN THE LIFE OF FAITH WAIT FOR THE  
NEW AGE. CHS. 12-15.

1. *General statement: Though the present evil age has not yet ended you must no longer live its life. Through the spiritual re-enforcement that your higher nature has experienced you must even now live the life of the Spirit Age to come and make preliminary demonstration of the will of God, 12: 1-2.*
12. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice,

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"Since God through all the generations has been mercifully preparing the race for the glory of the New Age, I beseech you, **my** Brothers who have yielded to his mercy and have felt the power of the New Age, to take the very flesh bodies, which once made you slaves of sin and which still link you to this present evil age of flesh, and lay them resolutely on the altar of God. Let them be a living sacrifice, untouched by priestly knife, purified from all the base uses they once served, no longer a foul offense to God but well pleasing to him. This will be the fitting form of worship for you to offer to God in the spiritual world which you have begun to enter (1). Do not follow the pattern of life that prevails in this evil age, but live as if you had already been granted the glorious bodies that shall be yours in the New Age. This is now possible since your higher nature has been so re-enforced that you are able to make demonstration of the will of God, doing everything that is good, well-pleasing to him, and as it shall be in the perfect Coming Age (2)."

1. **By the mercies of God.** The desire to show mercy to all has been the motive that has actuated God in all his strange dealing with the human race (11: 32), and this mercy will soon introduce the salvation of the Messianic Age. Therefore Paul can make it the firm basis of an intense appeal. **To present your**

holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.

2. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

2. *Especially do leaders and "gifted" persons, as they*

**bodies a living sacrifice.** The body used to be the willing host of Sin (6: 4, 12; 8: 13), and therefore through the body the whole personality became Sin's slave (7: 14, 23), but now that the "mind," or higher nature, of the believer has been "renewed," re-enforced by help from the spiritual world, he is able to take even the offending body and lay it on God's altar as a holy sacrifice that God will accept. All the "members" are placed at God's disposal (6: 13). There will be no more stealing hands or obscene tongues (Col. 3: 5-10). Paul here again protests against the ethical laxness of Gentile Christians who consider themselves emancipated from the ethical standards of the Jewish law. The body, therefore, is not regarded by Paul as inherently and irremediably evil. **Your reasonable service.** "Service" is a form of ritual worship like that of the temple (9: 4). The word translated "reasonable," or "spiritual," refers to the reason, or mind, as contrasted with the body. The word occurs in the Testament of Levi 3: 6, where the archangels in one of the heavens make propitiation to the Lord by presenting a "spiritual and bloodless offering."

2. **Not fashioned according to this world.** Not following the pattern of life that prevails in this present age as contrasted with the Coming Age (Eph. 1: 21). **Be ye transformed.** Put on already in spirit the new "form" of being that shall be yours in the New Age. Cf. Phil. 3: 21. **The renewing of your mind.** The "mind," or higher nature (7: 23), has been given new vigor (cf. II Cor. 4: 16) which fits it for the life of the New Age (cf. Col. 3: 10). **That ye may prove.** The word means to examine or test and then to approve after examination. Here the approval evidently involves giving expression to the will of God in personal conduct, for it is a transformation of life that is urged. **The good—will of God.** They are to express the will of God by doing that which is good, well-pleasing and all that it ought to be. The last word "perfect" refers to the life of the New Age (cf. I Cor. 13: 10).

*wait for the new age, need to cultivate the spirit of sober-minded humility, 12: 3-8.*

3. For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of

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"To be more explicit, let me warn every believer in your number against one great danger that confronts you as you begin to feel the exhilarating touch of the New Spirit Age upon your souls. I mean the danger of overestimating your own power and importance as you compare yourselves each with his brother. Rather let your estimate of yourself be determined solely by the degree of intimacy with the Lord in the life of faith that God may in his wisdom apportion to you (3). There must be no rivalry among us in our exercise of the powers that come to us from the spirit world. There is no rivalry among the members of the human body, though each has its own function to perform (4); neither should there be among us, who in our relationship to Christ constitute one body, of which each individual believer is a member with a peculiar function of his own to perform (5). Since we have these various functions, gracious gifts, each a peculiar expression of God's grace different from all the others, let us see to it that each exercise his gift with the sober-minded humility of which I am speaking. If one has received the gift of prophecy, let him exercise it soberly, with no desire to be conspicuous, but thinking gratefully only of the degree of intimacy with the Spirit of the Lord that God may be granting him as a prophet (6). If the gift be that of ministering to some form of common need in the brotherhood, let those of us who possess this gift be sober-minded in the discharge of our duties; or if the gift be power to teach, let the teacher show his sober-mindedness in the simple, unaffected way in which he teaches (7); or the eloquent exhorter, in the self-forgetfulness with which he exhorts his brothers; or he that administers the money which the brothers share with the needy, let him bestow the benefaction with no sense of his own importance but with unalloyed honesty and sympathy. If one be granted the gift of supervision, let him not magnify himself but do with sober promptness and thoroughness what his Lord sets him to do. If one's gift be that of expressing the sympathy of the brothers to those who sorrow or who return in penitence from sin, let him bring his comfort with a cheerful self-forgetful humility (8)."

3. Through the grace that was given me. The gracious gift of Gentile apostleship, which is his warrant for giving these instructions (1: 5, 15: 15-16.) To every man that is among you.



himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith.

The injunction to humility in vs. 3-5 applies to all believers, but in vs. 6-8 it becomes evident that Paul has the leaders and the "gifted" especially in mind, while in vs. 9-21 he addresses all believers regardless of office or gifts. Vs. 6-8 do not throw any clear light on the nature of the organization of the whole body of Christians in the city or of the local groups (16: 5) into which the main body was divided. Some of the persons mentioned here, e.g., "the rulers," would naturally be appointed by their fellow members, while the "prophets" would be designated by God's Spirit. Some spontaneous preliminary activity (like that of the Stephanas family in Corinth, I Cor. 16: 15-16) along certain lines might often lead to appointment by the church. **So to think as to think soberly.** In the case of a new religious movement, not yet fixed in stereotyped forms of expression, there was special danger of excessive individualism. The sense that the New Age was near and that the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Lord of the New Age, was present in the meetings of believers, directly inciting the spirits of individuals into some form of conspicuous activity, tended to make these individuals "over-think" themselves. Paul has already recognized another manifestation of this same tendency (11: 18, 20, 25). **According as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith.** One's estimate of himself is not to be either an over- or an under-estimate. It is to be determined by the measure of "faith" that God has "portioned" out to him. What is this faith that God deals out in portions? There is a "faith" that all Christians must have in order to be "acquitted" and pass victoriously into the salvation of the New Age (1: 16-17). There is also a faith which is a special "gift" of God for some believers and not for others (I Cor. 12: 9), a gift that seems to be connected with special power in prayer (I Cor. 13: 2). But here "faith" seems not quite to be either one of these. It is something that in varying measure accompanies a variety of special "gifts" (vs. 6-7). Perhaps it is the sense of definite personal connection with, and direction by, the Spirit of Christ, which may have been stronger in some than in others. Paul might easily consider that this was dealt out by God in different degrees to different individuals. This would be a natural way of explaining the fact that a specific gift seemed to be present with greater intensity in one than in another. Paul for example spoke with tongues more than all of them (I Cor. 14: 18). Each man is not

4. For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office:
5. so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another.
6. And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of our faith;

to be thinking complacently of himself or of his gift, but simply to be keenly and humbly appreciative of whatever sense of the nearness of his Lord in the life of faith God may deal out to him.

4-5. As the human spirit animates the human body and coordinates the activities of its various members, so the Spirit of Christ animates the church and coordinates the activities of individuals. Some sense of competition and rivalry would naturally exist in every church as the members compared their respective gifts (cf. v. 3). There seems to have been no special outbreak of this spirit in Rome. The situation in Corinth was quite different (I Cor. 12-14). **We who are many are one body in Christ.** The unity of the body of believers was due to their common relation to Christ. The Lord himself was present in the place of worship. They were meeting "in him" as their spiritual environment, and his Spirit, which is identified with him (8: 9-10), breaks out in individuals who show by their actions that they have received various gifts from him. "We" may mean "we Christians in the local meeting." If however it is meant to include all Christians everywhere, then Paul conceives here of the church in the world as the body of Christ, an idea that comes to full development in Ephesians.

6. **Gifts.** "Charismata." Powers bestowed as an expression of love. A list of them is given in I Cor. 12: 4-11 (cf. Eph. 4: 8-12.) **Gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us.** Each "gift" (charisma) is due to God's kindness (charis), a kindness that expresses itself in a variety of forms. **Prophecy.** The Christian prophet was one whose spirit God touched suddenly and temporarily, giving him a definite message to "speak forth." Sometimes in the meeting one prophet felt himself moved to speak before another had finished. In such cases the first man was at once to stop, for the reason that presumably God would not have stirred up a second, if he were not already through with the first (I Cor. 14: 29-33). The prophet's message was one calculated to appeal to the reason and conscience of a hearer (I Cor. 14: 24-25), and naturally often included warning, threat

7. or ministry, *let us give ourselves* to our ministry;  
or he that teacheth, to his teaching;  
8. or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that

or prediction (cf. Acts 21:10-11). **Let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith.** The grammatical structure is obscure because so many words are to be supplied. The words "let us prophesy" have no equivalent in the Greek. Perhaps the more natural verb to supply is "think soberly," brought forward from the general injunction in v. 3: "If one have the gift of prophecy, let him think soberly of himself according to the proportion of his faith." He is not to be proud of his gift. His estimate of himself as a prophet is to be determined by the degree of direct connection with Christ in the life of faith that God seems to have granted him. Prophets who were conceited or lacked balance could do a great deal of harm. Some such had brought the gift of prophecy into disrepute at one time in Thessalonica (I Thess. 5:19-20). That they sometimes became excited and disorderly and needed exhortation to self-control is evident from I Cor. 14:32-33.

**7. Or ministry.** "If one have the gift of ministry, let him think soberly of himself in the ministry." It is difficult to tell what is meant by "ministry." It was a word which covered a variety of activities: "There are diversities of ministrations" (I Cor. 12:5). Paul uses the word to designate his whole mission to the Gentile world (11:13; cf. II Cor. 6:3), and also his delivery of Gentile money to Christian Jews in Jerusalem (15:31). It describes the activity of a whole family in Corinth (I Cor. 16:15), who perhaps made their home a hostel for traveling Christians—or for the poor and sick. In Acts 6:1, 4 it is used both of food and the word. The fact that here in Romans it stands between prophesying and teaching might be taken to indicate some form of speech, but this is of course not a necessary inference. **He that teacheth to his teaching.** The Greek reads "in the teaching," that is, "He that teacheth, *let him think soberly of himself in the teaching.*" In I Cor. 14:26 various people appear in the meeting, each with a "teaching." Perhaps the word indicates the absence of the sudden impulse that comes upon the prophet. If the teaching were sufficiently prolonged it would become a lecture.

**8. Or he that exhorteth.** Like the teacher he may have possessed more permanent inspiration than the prophet, but unlike the teacher his subject-matter would be hortatory rather than explanatory. An illustration of what was considered written exhortation would perhaps be the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb.

giveth, *let him do it* with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

13:22; cf. also Acts 4:36). **He that giveth, let him do it with liberality.** Literally, "He that giveth, in simplicity." Here the grammatical force of the verb "to think soberly" seems to have run out, but its idea is expressed by the qualifying phrase. The giver shows his humility and sober thought of himself by having singleness, or simplicity, of purpose in his giving. He does not give in such a way as to exalt, or attract attention to, himself. He has the simple compassionate desire to relieve distress. Since most of the activities here described are public, it seems natural to regard "the giver" as one who at least semi-officially gives to the needy the sums collected for them. The word implies a sharing, and is therefore properly used of one who gives something of his own to another. It is not inconceivable, however, that the word should be used even of a treasurer's benefactions, where the warm personal relationship is emphasized rather than official distribution. If the reference is to one who disburses the money of others, the exhortation to give with "singleness" or "simplicity" might include a warning against any duplicity or dishonesty in handling the church's money. **He that ruleth.** The word may mean "to stand before," that is, as leader or superintendent; or "to stand for," that is, as protector (cf. 16:2) or host (Hort). The use of the word in I Thess. 5:12-13 makes it probable that superintendence is its meaning. There the persons designated by the word are charged with the responsibility of admonition, and are to be treated with respect. In I Tim. 3:4, 5, 12 the word is used of the father who "ruleth well his own house." Such persons were responsible for remonstrating with disorderly members, caring for the tempted and discouraged (I Thess. 5:14). They may also have had some responsibility for the order of worship in the public meeting. **With diligence.** Literally "in haste" or "earnestness." They were to show their sober-mindedness by the speed, promptness, decisiveness with which they dealt with the disorderly or hurried to the side of the tempted and discouraged. **He that sheweth mercy.** The fact that this designation occurs in a list of those who, with one other possible exception, perform public functions, makes it probable that the one who shows mercy had some special responsibility for visiting those in sorrow and sickness, perhaps also for reclaiming offending members, or that he was a leader one of whose various responsibilities was to receive penitent backsliders. The experience of a modern missionary shows how many such cases

3. *Love in its various manifestations must characterize the life of all the brothers, 12: 9-21.*

9. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

there would naturally be. **With cheerfulness.** The kindness is to bring good cheer to the sorrowing. There is to be no slow, grudging forgiveness. The penitents are to be welcomed back with prompt enthusiasm.

"Let your love be absolutely sincere. Loathe the ugliness of evil; grasp the good with a grip that never relaxes (9). Let your brother-love have the tenderness of family affection; be glad to lead a brother forward into any place of honor which you might desire for yourself (10), but be quick to find some work for yourself and do it with your might. Kindle with enthusiasm over every good cause, but without being domineering—remember that you are the Lord's bond-slave (11). Let your heart be always filled with the glad, uplifting hope of the New Age; keep steady in trouble; pray right on through it all (12). Do not confine your activity to prayer, but be ready to help a brother with money in his time of need; always be glad to receive a guest into your home (13). Let no malicious treatment that you experience stop the steady outflow of good-will from your heart. There must be no ill-will in your heart nor word of cursing on your lips (14). Be alert in your sympathies; put yourself instantly in the other man's place, exult in his successes and grieve over his misfortunes (15). Be glad to find it possible to agree with other men. Do not be looking for public recognition, but be ready to cast your lot in with the obscure. Do not be too confident of your own infallibility, but have a mind hospitable to the suggestions of others (16). Never meet ill-will with ill-will. Do not be disregarding of the good opinion of others; take pains to seem honest as well as to be honest (17). Seek no quarrel with any; if strained relations arise, do not let the fault be yours (18). Do not try to punish any man; leave that to God; the scripture clearly represents that to be his prerogative (19). Instead, overwhelm your enemy with unostentatious kindness; quietly give him food and drink in his time of need, and, as the scripture says, your kindness will be like coals of fire on his head, setting his face aflame with shame over his mistreatment of you (20). Do not weakly allow another man's ill-will to destroy your good-will, but by your invincible good-will subdue his ill-will (21)."

9. There is of course no sharp break between vs. 8 and 9. The injunctions in vs. 6-8 have, with two possible exceptions, referred

10. In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honour preferring one another;
11. in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;
12. rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing steadfastly in prayer;

to certain classes, while these in vs. 9-21 refer to all. In a series of verbless phrases Paul with a few bold strokes makes his picture of the disciple of Jesus waiting for the dawning of the New Age. **Let love be without hypocrisy.** There is no verb in the Greek: "Love unfeigned." Love is the basal virtue. All that follows is an explication of love. In this respect the paragraph 9-21 is like I Cor. 13 which also follows a discussion of "gifts" (I Cor. 12) like that in vs. 3-8 here. Since love, or invincible good-will, is basal in character, the prime requisite is that it shall be absolutely genuine. **Abhor that which is evil.** Here and in the next clause the Greek uses simply a participle—"abhorring," "cleaving." In the life of love moral reactions must be quick and strong. The evil must seem so ugly as to be repugnant, and the good so beautiful that one will be "glued" to it. There will be no playing with temptation.

10. **Tenderly affectioned.** A word that expresses the warm love of members of a family for each other. The believers constitute a family. The church is to be famous in the community for the warm affection that its members feel for each other. **In honor preferring one another.** The "brothers" love each other so much that it would give each the most profound satisfaction to see the other receive an honor, even an honor to which both might naturally have aspired.

11. **In diligence not slothful.** Readiness to see another honored instead of one's self is not to degenerate into sluggish apathy. If one lets his brother take the coveted opportunity, he must be quick to find another for himself! **Fervent in spirit.** "In spirit boiling." Spirit is probably not "spirit" as contrasted with "flesh," but rather the part of a man that thinks and decides. The phrase describes the wholesome enthusiasm that the spirit of a man experiences when a good cause is presented to him. **Serving the Lord.** The boiling enthusiasm does not become crass extravagance. Its possessor never forgets that he is a bond-servant of the Lord. Instead of "the Lord" some MSS. read "the time," or "opportunity."

12. **Rejoicing in hope.** In hope of the New Age that the Lord whom he serves will introduce at his coming (cf. 5:2), and in



13. communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality.
14. Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.
15. Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep.
16. Be of the same mind one toward another. Set

the prospect of everlasting fellowship with his Lord (I Thess. 4:17). **Patient in tribulation.** The great hope with which he looks toward the future enables him to endure present adversity without becoming irritable, nervous or sour. The same combination appears in I Cor. 13:7. **Continuing steadfastly in prayer.** The source of his joy and patience is God on whom he steadfastly fixes his mind in prayer. When the immediate object of his effort relaxes its hold upon his attention, his mind instinctively reverts to God. He continually thinks of his work in its connection with God.

**13. Communicating to the necessities of the saints.** He does not confine his activity to praying! In love he so identifies himself with others that their needs become his, and he uses his resources to meet their needs as he does to meet his own. **Given to hospitality.** In this way he meets a particular class of "necessities." He shares his home, especially with traveling Christians who particularly need to be guarded against the fierce temptations and dangers that beset travelers in public inns. Especially in Rome would there be many opportunities to entertain Christians who had occasion to visit the capital. Hospitality will not seem burdensome to him. He "pursues" it, runs eagerly after it.

**14. Bless them that persecute you.** To "bless" is to express in some way one's desire that all be well with another. The word translated "persecute" is the word translated "pursuing," or "given to," in the clause preceding. Perhaps the one use of the word suggested the other. The one who pursues another to do him evil is never to be met with a curse. His evil intent is not to be ignored or apathetically endured (cf. Lk. 17:3), but to be met with an expression of invincible good-will.

**15. A concrete description of the quick, well disciplined sympathies possessed by the man of the loving heart.** He instinctively puts himself in the other man's place and feels as the other man does, even when the other man's success is superior to his own!

**16. Be of the same mind.** A more general description of the frame of mind mentioned in the last sentence. There is to be



not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17. Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men.
18. If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men.
19. Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance be-longeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.

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the largest possible degree of agreement in the consideration of mutual interests. The danger to be avoided in this connection appears in the following clauses—the desire for pre-eminence and an over-confidence in the correctness of one's own opinions. Cf. Prov. 3:7 which may have been in Paul's mind, especially since Proverbs is again suggested in v. 17 and clearly quoted in v. 20. This injunction as well as v. 3 is to be compared with 11:18, 20, 25.

17. **Render to no man evil for evil.** Seems to be a repetition of v. 14, but a broader statement and one that perhaps by some association of ideas came into Paul's mind in connection with v. 16. The danger mentioned in v. 16 might easily lead to this. **Take thought for things honorable.** Apparently a reminiscence of Prov. 3:4. Confidence in one's own opinions (v. 16) might lead to an unwarrantable indifference to the good opinion of others. The Christian love which is the theme of all this paragraph will necessarily value the esteem of others. It is desirable to seem to be honest as well as to be honest. Paul's application of this truth to a situation in his own life appears in II Cor. 8:20.

18. Paul's remembrance of the situation in II Cor. 8:20 recalls the whole Corinthian controversy recently terminated, in which he had found it impossible to be at peace with certain men (cf. II Cor. 10-13). This leads him to say "if it be possible" and "as much as in *you* lieth."

19. **Avenge not yourselves beloved.** The keen sense of having suffered wrong, that appears here, seems also to be a product of this recent controversy. Paul was ready to refrain from inflicting any punishment on his enemies, and to leave them in God's hands. The quotation seems to be a reminiscence of Deut. 32:35.

20. But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.

21. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

4. *The brotherhood must obey the government officials,*  
13: 1-7.

13. Let every soul be in subjection to the higher

20. From Prov. 25: 21-22. If an enemy be overwhelmed with kindness, his face will be set aflame with the blush of shame over his misconduct.

21. The pen picture of the disciple, of the man with the loving heart, ends with the stroke that presents a victor.

"Let every person obey the civil authorities. All power that preserves order, as the civil authorities do, comes from God. God therefore is behind the civil authorities (1). Therefore anyone who resists them, resists something that God has established, and will have to reckon with God in the judgment day so near at hand (2). Do I hear you say that we ought not to fear anyone but God? You will have no occasion to fear the civil authorities if you do what is right. Do what is right and you will find them praising you (3), which is the agreeable function God means them to exercise. But if you resist them, then you will feel the edge of the sword the official wears and will realize that his sword is more than a piece of personal adornment! It will really be God's wrath that you will experience, for it is really God who has appointed him to punish evil doers (4). Therefore obedience to civil authorities is something that you ought to render because of conscientious conviction that God would have you do so, and not simply because you wish to avoid being punished by them (5). This same principle applies to the payment of your taxes. God has appointed officials to collect the taxes that are essential to the maintenance of government and social order (6). So do not fail to render to each official that which it is his special function to receive—whether it be taxes, customs, the fear due to the emperor, or the honor due to lesser officials (7)."

1. **Be in subjection to the higher powers.** It was easy for a certain type of mind to argue that, since Jesus and his messianic kingdom would soon displace all the institutions of the present evil age, the civil government had no legitimate authority. The

- powers: for there is no power but of God; and the *powers* that be are ordained of God.
2. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgement.
  3. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same:
  4. for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But

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fact that the civil authorities were often connected officially with pagan worship would contribute to this feeling. The feeling might express itself in open disregard of government regulations or in secret tax dodging (vs. 6-7). **Ordained of God.** Paul felt strongly that God was back of all good order (cf. I Cor. 14: 33). Furthermore, he knew that the social order maintained by the government contributed to the successful propagation of the Christian movement, and was therefore of God. He had repeatedly been protected by government officials in his missionary activity. In the very city in which he was writing this letter the pro-consul had saved him from disaster (Acts 18: 12-16; cf. Acts 19: 31, 35-38). He might have felt differently at a later time, when the government began to persecute the Christians and to enforce emperor worship (cf. Rev. 17: 4 ff). Especially in Rome it was important that Christians should not incur the ill-will of the government, for prejudice against them in the capital city might easily be communicated to officials in all parts of the empire. It is perhaps significant that Clement, the Bishop of Rome, writing forty years later to the Christians in Corinth, also emphasizes the importance of obeying "our rulers and governors upon the earth" (chs. 60-61).

2. **Receive to themselves judgment.** Not simply the penalty inflicted by the civil authorities, but penalty in God's judgment day.

3. **Rulers are not a terror.** The word translated "terror" is the ordinary word for fear. Paul imagines his readers arguing that they ought not to fear anyone but God. They will not have occasion to do so, if they behave themselves!

4. **Beareth not the sword in vain.** That is, not as a mere personal ornament.

if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil.

5. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience sake.
6. For for this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing.
7. Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.
5. *The Brotherhood must not look to the speedy coming of the New Age as a means of evading the payment of private debts, for this would be inconsistent with that neighbor love which is the fulfillment of the law and*

5. **Not only because of the wrath but also for conscience' sake.** Not only to avoid the penalty, but from conscientious conviction that obedience to God involves obedience to law.

7. **Tribute.** Direct taxes. **Custom.** Indirect taxes. **Fear.** Perhaps the feeling with which the emperor ought to be regarded.

"Not only must you be conscientious in meeting your obligations to government officials, but you must also leave no private debt unpaid, for to do this would be to repudiate the great debt that we are always gladly paying and never discharging,—the debt of neighbor love. It is the continuous paying of this debt that keeps the law and so prepares for judgment and the New Age (8). For all the commandments,—Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not covet, and any other such—are summed up, as the Lord said, in the great commandment, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (9). Love would never do any harm to a neighbor, and since the object of the law is to keep men from being harmed, loving one's neighbor is the fulfilling of law (10). I urge upon you such keeping of the spirit of the law, for we know the critical juncture

*the necessary preparation for the judgment day,*  
13: 8-14.

8. Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law.
9. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.
10. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law.

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in which we are living. It is a time to arouse ourselves from lethargy, for the dawning of the New Age with Jesus Christ's messianic salvation is nearer than it was when we first entered into faith-fellowship with him (11). The long night of this age of sin and darkness is far advanced; the Coming Age of righteousness and light is very near. Let us lay aside forevermore all the works of this dark age, and take to ourselves the equipment needful for life and work in the New Age of light (12). While still in this dark borderland let us walk as if the day had dawned. Take no part in drunken revelings, in obscene sexual indulgence. Be no party to any jealous rivalry (13). Assume that you even now possess the glorious spiritual body which we shall share with our Lord Jesus Christ, and make no further provision for gratifying the lusts of our present flesh body (14)."

8. **Owe no man anything.** This injunction to pay private debts springs naturally out of the injunction to pay taxes and customs charges (v. 7). **He that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law.** Paul very probably knew Jesus' use of Lev. 19: 18 (cf. Mark 12: 28-34). In accordance with this principle Paul disregarded many detailed commandments found in the law, since by so doing he could the better obey the spirit of the law (cf. I Cor. 9: 19-22). Faith in Christ did not take the place of keeping the law. On the contrary it gave power to keep the very spirit of the law.

10. **Worketh no ill to his neighbor.** This is the negative statement of the principle. To fail to pay a just debt to a neighbor would be working ill to him.

11. And this, knowing the season, that now it is high time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we *first* believed.
12. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.
13. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy.
14. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

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11. **And this.** I say this about fulfilling the law because the judgment day is near, and such fulfillment of law is the necessary preparation for it. **Salvation nearer.** The dawning of the New Age, which brings "the salvation," is nearer now than it was when we first gave our lives in faith to the Lord of the New Age.

12. **The night is far spent.** This age and this world are darkness, under the control of "the world rulers of this darkness" (Eph. 6: 12). The Coming Age will begin when the Lord with light from the heavens above breaks victoriously in upon this darkness. This time is now close at hand. **Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness.** Those who are living in faith-fellowship with the Lord have already practically entered into the New Age of light, and must live accordingly. **The armor.** The word means either "weapons" (cf. John 18: 3), in which case the figure is that of a soldier rising in the darkness of the early morning to put on his armor, or "tools" (cf. Rom. 6: 13), in which case the figure is that of a workman going out to his day's work. The latter meaning is suggested by the word "works" in the preceding clause. **Strife and jealousy.** Paul's thought has already turned to the subject that will be introduced in 14: 1.

14. **Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.** This is evidently equivalent to making no "provision for the flesh." It seems to mean putting on the new form of body like in kind to that of Jesus Christ, which will speedily in the New Age displace the present

6. *Brothers who conscientiously abstain from all use of meat and wine, although unjustified in their asceticism, are to be received into the brotherhood and treated with consideration, a consideration that they in turn must show toward those who do not share their ascetic viewpoint, 14: 1-23.*

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body (Phil. 3:21). They are to act as if they already had it. The Greek word translated "put on," or "be clothed," appears in connections similar to the present one in Gal. 3:27; Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; I Cor. 15:53; II Cor. 5:3. The word was perhaps suggestive to Paul's readers because of its use in the current religious phraseology of the mystery religions. (Cf. Clemen, *Primitive Christianity*, p. 232.) **Make no provision for the flesh.** That is, make no provision for developing the selfish instinct, for selfish, flesh men will be eliminated from the civilization of the New Age.

"Admit to the Brotherhood any man who has faith in Jesus as Lord, even though his sense of the Christian's liberty to enjoy all good things be not yet strongly developed. But when you have admitted him, do not begin a censorious criticism of his defective opinions (1). One man's faith in Jesus as Lord is such as to enable him to eat all kinds of food without injury to his conscience; another with a less adequately developed moral sense feels that he must be a vegetarian (2). The man who eats freely of all kinds of food must not sneer at the vegetarian; neither must the vegetarian condemn as a sinner the one who eats meat. God has accepted both, for both are men of faith (3). Each must recognize the other as a servant of God and therefore as one who will stand or fall in the judgment day as God, who alone is his Master, shall determine. God will surely make him, as a man of faith, stand against all attack, for God's power is pledged to such (4). Men differ too in their views regarding the sacredness of days. To one man it seems that certain days ought to be distinguished as days for fasting or for the observance of the Lord's supper. To another man one day seems as appropriate as another for such uses. Let each man feel perfectly sure that no other man can call him to account for the opinion that he holds regarding any matter of days or diet (5). Men of diverse views on such points are all alike in their common purpose to please God (6). It is our relation to God that is of supreme importance in life and death (7). If we live, it is as the



Lord Christ's bond-servants; if we die, we still belong to him (8). Christ died so that in the realms of the dead as well as in the realms of the living his empire might be established (9). So since we are all to stand before God's great judgment seat, as the scripture assures us, why should any one of us look upon his brother with sneers or condemnation? (10-11). Each of us will have enough to do in preparing to give account of himself to God (12). Let us not therefore exercise the critical faculty upon each other any longer. Let us rather look critically to see that we never do anything that blocks a brother's way into the life of the Coming Age (13). Before going further let me say that I personally, as one who lives in fellowship with the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, am fully convinced that no moral defilement comes from eating any kind of food. There is moral defilement only when the person who eats feels that in eating he is doing what he ought not to do (14). I said that he who can eat meat without protest of his conscience ought to look out that in so doing he does not block his brother's way into the coming kingdom of God. For it would certainly be inconsistent with the love that is the essence of the life of faith, to let a vegetarian brother be so embittered by your meat-eating as to destroy the character that Christ died to produce! (15). Do not let your liberty to eat all kinds of food, which is certainly a good thing, come into disrepute as the cause of a brother's ruin (16). You can limit your liberty without the slightest detriment to your hope of the coming kingdom. The kingdom will not consist in eating and drinking, but in the righteousness, joy and peace which we have already begun to experience through the presence of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, and to the development of which in others you will contribute by limiting your liberty on occasion (17). If in this way you serve Christ's purpose to save men for his kingdom, you are sure to be well pleasing to God and to be approved by all good men (18). So then let us all set our hearts on doing everything to secure peace and the development of each other's character (19). Do not, just for the sake of eating a little meat, pull down something that God himself is building up. Do not misunderstand me. I repeat what I said a moment ago. No kind of food has power to produce moral defilement. To eat it produces moral defilement only when one eats it feeling that he ought not to do so, and so finds his way into the kingdom blocked (20). It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor do anything else which would block a brother's way into the coming kingdom (21). Rejoice secretly before God in the strong clear faith and the enlightened conscience that enable you to eat all foods, and remember also that he is indeed a happy man who before God need not condemn himself as one who destroyed his brother's faith by pur-

14. But him that is weak in faith receive ye, *yet* not to doubtful disputations.
2. One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs.
3. Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

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suing those courses of conduct that his own enlightened conscience approved (22). A final warning to my scrupulous brother: By no means eat meat if you still doubt whether it would be right for you to do so. In that case you would show yourself willing to run the risk of displeasing Christ, and this would be inconsistent with that faith in Christ the very essence of which is the purpose to obey him. Any act which does not spring from the great purpose to obey him comes from some source not yet subjected to him, and is therefore sin (23)."

1. **Weak in faith.** See on 12: 3. He has taken Jesus in faith as his Lord, but he lacks a clear, correct realization of what it is right, and what it is not right, for one in this relationship to do. **Not for decision of scruples.** Better, "not for censorious criticism of his opinions."

2. A situation had arisen among the Christians at Rome, which had doubtless arisen in other places. A little later it appears distinctly in the environment of the Colossian church (Col. 2: 16, 20-22), though there in connection with other very objectionable features that do not appear here. A certain circle on religious grounds were vegetarians. Paul calls them "the weak." They do not seem to be afraid that they might inadvertently eat meat that had been consecrated to a pagan deity, as in I Cor. 8, 10, for in that case Paul would deal with the matter as he does in I Cor. 10: 25 ff. They are rather representatives of a general ascetic tendency of the times, which for instance is attributed by Philostratus to Apollonius of Tyana, who lived for a time in Rome in the first century. Apollonius says that Pythagoras "suffered not his belly to be polluted by partaking of the flesh of animals" (Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 6: 11, Conybeare). These persons had probably been vegetarians before they became Christians, and now applied for admission (v. 1) to the Christian brotherhood, bringing their unpopular vegetarian prejudices with them.

3. **Set at nought.** The man who eats all kinds of food rather scornfully regards the vegetarian's scruples as foolish. **Judge**

4. Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand.
5. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind.
6. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, unto the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

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**him that eateth.** On the other hand the vegetarian feels sure that the meat-eating Christian is doing positive wrong. Paul asserts that God has accepted both men, for both have faith, that is, look to Jesus as Lord.

4. When either party attempts to judge the other he is assuming God's prerogative. Furthermore, in each case he is attempting to overthrow a man whom God proposes to make to stand.

5. **One man esteemeth one day above another.** Perhaps an entirely distinct point of controversy, though possibly connected with the general idea of eating, if the day was "esteemed" by fasting or feasting on it. There is the same combination in Col. 2: 16. The case is not one in which persons differ as to which of two possible days shall be observed, but as to whether any special day must be set apart for the purposes in question. These "days" may be days mentioned in the Jewish scriptures ("a new moon or a sabbath" Col. 2: 16), but this would not indicate that those arguing for such observance were Jews, because the Jewish scriptures were the treasured possession of Gentile Christians. Any observance of Jewish days in Rome was of course not part of a movement back to Judaism, for in that case Paul would have vigorously opposed it as he did when he was dealing with Jewish propagandists in Galatia (Gal. 4: 8-11). **Let each man be fully assured in his own mind.** Fully assured that his relation to his Lord is not imperiled by his attitude on the question of food or days,—provided only that his great purpose is to please his Lord.

7. For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself.
8. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.
9. For to this end Christ died, and lived *again*, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.
10. But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God.
11. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow, And every tongue shall confess to God.
12. So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.
13. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumb-

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7. The thought of accountability to God alone (v. 6) brings life and death and the judgment day before Paul. In vs. 7-12 he so portrays these great and inspiring realities as to make all acrimonious controversy over days and diet seem trivial and wicked.

9. **That he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.** This rests upon the idea that there are various "worlds." Jesus came from the heavenly "world" into this "world," and after death entered into the "world" of the dead. He conquered and became Lord of every world into which he entered.

13. In the first clause Paul closes the argument against acrimonious criticism of each other. In the second clause he takes up a new point. It is not sufficient merely to refrain from criticizing a brother on these points. One must do whatever he can positively to help his brother on in the life of faith. The words from here on through v. 22 are addressed to the strong in the faith, that is, to those who feel under no obligation to God to become vegetarians. They must see to it that their conduct does

ling block in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling.

14. I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself: save that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.
15. For if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died.
16. Let not then your good be evil spoken of:
17. for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking,

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not prove ruinous to the Christian faith of their vegetarian brothers. This might happen conceivably in one of two ways. Some of the vegetarians might become so bitter ("grieved" v. 15) over what seemed to them the sin of their meat-eating brothers as to destroy their own "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit" (v. 17). More often they might be led by the example of the strong to become meat-eaters, while still really thinking that they ought to remain vegetarians (vs. 20, 23).

14. **Persuaded in the Lord Jesus.** The conviction had come to Paul in his faith-fellowship with the Lord Jesus after having submitted the matter to the Lord in prayer. Or perhaps he had acquaintance with some saying of Jesus like that recorded in Mark 7: 15, 18, 19. Paul here takes his place with the strong. Meat does not have power to defile the man who eats it. But the man who, wrongly supposing it to be defiling, nevertheless eats it, suffers moral defilement because he does what he thinks he ought not to do.

15. **For.** Introduces the reason for the injunction in v. 13; the thought of v. 14 is parenthetical. **Destroy not with thy meat.** It is assumed that the weak brother may become bitter or be shocked out of his Christian faith by seeing his strong brother eat meat. If so, the strong brother would be ruining what Christ even died to save from ruin. This must not be.

16. **Your good be evil spoken of.** The eating of meat is a thoroughly good thing in itself, but the act gets sadly into disrepute if it contributes to another man's moral ruin.

17. A man can forego the eating of meat without in the least degree diminishing his part in the coming kingdom of God, of

- but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.
18. For he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God, and approved of men.
  19. So then, let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.
  20. Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. All things indeed are clean; howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.
  21. It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *to do anything* whereby thy brother stumbleth.
  22. The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God. Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he approveth.

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which the peace-bringing presence of the Spirit in his soul already constitutes the beginning.

18. **Herein serveth Christ.** The man who by ceasing to eat meat preserves the faith of a brother for whom Christ died, is of course "serving Christ." He is helping to accomplish what Christ died to secure.

20. The point is so important and so easily overlooked that Paul repeats again what was said in vs. 14-15.

21. **Nor to drink wine.** Probably most of the vegetarians were also teetotalers. So Apollonius of Tyana, who thought that wine, although a "clean drink," "endangered the mental balance and system and darkened as with mud the ether which is in the soul" (Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 1: 8, Conybeare). **Stumbleth.** Gives up his faith in Christ, and so is "destroyed," or "lost" (v. 15). Paul is not arguing that one must never do anything that displeases another.

22. **The faith—have thou to thyself.** Take a secret satisfaction in your ability to see that meat-eating is harmless, and thank God for your enlightened conscience. **Happy is he.** The man of liberty is a happy man, if he can stand before God without being condemned as the destroyer of a brother by the course of conduct which his enlightened conscience approves.

23. But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

7. *In general the strong must always receive and help the weak. This Christ did when he bore our reproaches. and especially when as a strong Jewish Christ he brought help also to you Gentiles, 15: 1-13.*

23. **He that doubteth is condemned.** A strong word of warning to the vegetarian. He must not begin to eat meat while still doubting whether it is right to do so, for he would be showing himself willing to run the risk of doing something that his Lord would not approve, and this would be inconsistent with that faith in his Lord the very essence of which is delight in obeying him. **Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.** Anything which does not spring from a desire to obey the Lord, must be sin, must spring from some department of life that has not been brought into glad subjection to his will.

"It is a general principle, running through all Christian living, that in the great Brotherhood we who are strong ought to use our strength in bearing the weaknesses of those who are not strong, rather than to go independently on pleasing ourselves (1). Let each one please his neighbor, with reference to building up his character and so fitting him for the great good that awaits us in the coming Kingdom (2). In this way we shall be true to the spirit of Christ, who certainly did not please himself, but, as it stands written in scripture, even went so far as to take on himself reproaches that should have fallen on the sinner (3). All the statements made in scripture were, like this one, written for our instruction, so that, comforted by them in patient endurance of all burdens that our solicitude for the weak may lay upon us, we shall go forward hoping confidently for the blessedness of the coming kingdom (4). May the God, who enables us to endure patiently and who constantly comforts us, grant that you all have the same mind, being brought into accord with the self-sacrificing spirit of Christ, who bore the burdens of the weak, as I have just said (5). Then you will with one accord praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (6). So receive each other as Christ, to the glorifying of God, received you Gentiles (7). I may rightly say



15. Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.
2. Let each one of us please his neighbour for that which is good, unto edifying.
3. For Christ also pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me.

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that Christ in all his reception of Jews and Gentiles glorified God, for, in being made a self-sacrificing Jewish minister to the Jews, he glorified God by vindicating the truthfulness of God who had promised the Jewish fathers a Messiah (8); and when he, a strong Jewish Christ, turned to you weak Gentiles, he glorified God by setting you all to praising God for his mercy. This too was written in the scriptures for our comfort and hope, as I said above. The Psalmist makes the Christ say: 'I will give praise unto thee among the Gentiles and will sing unto thy name' (9). And again the Christ is made to say: 'Rejoice ye Gentiles together with God's own people' (10). And again: 'Praise the Lord all ye Gentiles and let all the peoples praise him' (11). And again, Isaiah says: 'There shall be the root of Jesse who will rise up to rule over Gentiles also as well as Jews. On him shall the Gentiles hope' (12). Now may the God, who has in Christ brought hope to the Gentiles, fill you Gentile Christians in Rome with all joy and peace as you have faith in the Lord Christ, and make you abound in hope of the coming kingdom through the power of the Holy Spirit who gives us our foretaste of its life (13)."

1. The discussion of the case of the vegetarians and the meat-eaters ends in 14:23. In some texts the doxology of 16:25-27 appears at the end of ch. 14. (See Introduction, p. 62). In 15:1 the general relation of strong to weak is taken up and the thought gradually comes back to the great theme, so much on Paul's mind at this time, namely, the relation of the Jewish nation to Christianity now so largely in Gentile hands. This theme runs through the whole of ch. 15 and colors all references to Paul's personal plans.

2. **Unto edifying.** Unto the building up of his Christian character. The vital interests of the weak brother take precedence over the mere pleasure and personal convenience of the strong brother.

3. **As it is written.** The quotation is from Ps. 69:9 (LXX 68:10), where the words are addressed to Jehovah. The writer says that the reproaches of those that reproach Jehovah have

4. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope.
5. Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus:
6. that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
7. Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God.

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fallen upon him. This would of course not then be a case in which the strong helped the weak, but simply a case where one did not please himself. The Psalm is one which was supposed to portray the sufferings of Christ (Ps. 69: 21, Mt. 27: 34). It may be that Paul did not regard the immediate context in the Psalm, but used the quotation with the general thought that Christ bore the reproaches that would properly have fallen upon sinners.

4. **Written for our learning.** A justification of Paul's use of the quotation just preceding, and a statement of his conception of the purpose of scripture. Scripture was written in order that subsequent generations might have hope—that is, hope of salvation in the Messianic Age. The scriptures will comfort them by holding up this hope and so will help them to endure with "patience" such privations as the strong experience when they bear the burdens of the weak.

5. **According to Christ Jesus.** As they accord with the self-sacrificing example of Christ Jesus they will "be of the same mind" and "with one mouth" praise God. There will be realized among the Roman Christians that same unity of spirit which Paul expects to see on the large scale of the world, when the Jewish nation accepts Christ and unites with Gentile Christians in looking for the Lord's coming, which will then occur (11: 25-36).

7. **Wherefore receive ye one another.** This is the language of 14: 1, now applied to all relations between any strong and any weak, and not specially to the relation between meat-eaters and vegetarians. As Christ also received you. If we read "you" here rather than "us," the "you" refers to Gentiles, in which case Jesus is regarded in the next verse as a strong Jewish Christ receiving weak Gentiles. The strong among them must receive

8. For I say that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises *given* unto the fathers,
9. and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, Therefore will I give praise unto thee among the Gentiles, And sing unto thy name.
10. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.
11. And again, Praise the Lord all ye Gentiles; And let all the peoples praise him.
12. And again, Isaiah saith, There shall be the root of Jesse, And he that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles; On him shall the Gentiles hope.

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the weak because they, who as Gentiles have all been weak, have all been received by the strong Jewish Christ. It is entirely in accord with Paul's general viewpoint to regard the Jewish nation as strong and the Gentiles as weak. The Jewish nation has been the strong root of the tame olive tree and the Gentiles have been the less important, grafted wild olive branches (11: 17-18, 21, 24). **To the glory of God.** Christ's receiving Gentiles reveals the loving kindness of God (v. 9), and so makes God seem glorious in the eyes of men.

8. **For.** The connective introduces two statements (vs. 8, 9) showing how Christ in two particulars has contributed "to the glory of God." First, as "a minister" (one who did not "please himself") "of circumcision," that is, "a circumcised minister," or a minister to the circumcised and so of course himself circumcised. Christ did something "in behalf of the truth of God," namely, as a Jewish Messiah he confirmed the truthfulness of God by fulfilling God's promise to the Jewish fathers that there should be a Messiah of their own race (cf. 9: 4-5).

9. In the second place he contributed "to the glory of God" by coming as a strong Jewish Messiah to weak Gentiles, a revelation of God's mercy that made them "glorify God." Then follow four quotations predicting the promise of God's mercy to Gentiles, two of them (vs. 10, 12) emphasizing the fact that Jews and Gentiles rejoice together over God's mercy.

13. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Ghost.

8. *The fact that you are Gentile Christians justifies a letter from one who has been greatly blessed by God as pioneer apostle to Gentiles in all parts of the world, and who now wishes to enlist your interest in the conciliatory gift which he is bearing to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem from their Gentile brothers in the west, and also in plans for a Spanish mission which he will soon lay before you in person,*  
15: 14-33.

13. **The God of hope fill you with all joy.** This catches up the last clause of v. 12. May the promise that the Gentiles shall hope in the Christ be fulfilled abundantly in the case of the Gentile Christians to whom Paul is writing.

"Be assured, Brothers, that I myself, even though I have written to you at such length, and with something of admonition, am entirely convinced that you are full of goodness and knowledge, well able to admonish yourselves (14). If I have written here and there somewhat more boldly than my confidence in you would seem to necessitate, it has been because I knew that I was not criticizing you, but was simply calling familiar ideas to your remembrance, and also because in a sense you as a Gentile church belong to me. God has graciously honored me with the responsibility (15) of being a priestly minister of Jesus Christ to all Gentiles, a priestly minister in the service of the Gospel of God, charged with the responsibility of presenting the Gentiles of the empire, yourselves included, as an offering made acceptable to God by the purifying power of the Holy Spirit in their lives (16). You see, therefore, that I have good reason to glory in the opportunity to take part in God's great enterprise that has come to me through my connection with Jesus Christ (17). I should not dare to speak with exultation of any achievements except those which Christ's power has wrought out through me, as I have gone from place to place everywhere winning Gentiles to the life of obedient faith in Jesus Christ. His power has operated in me through

speech and deed (18). It has been evident in my power to perform wonderful cures and other marvelous works, in my power to give expression to the divine energy of the Holy Spirit. With the amplitude of Christ's power I have given full expression to the gospel message, all the way from Jerusalem and the regions in that part of the world to Illyricum on the sea that washes the shores of your own Italy (19). In all these journeys I have been a pioneer, as my apostolic commission requires me to be, going where no other has been before me, ambitious to lay foundations and not to build on those laid by other men (I have recently known those whose ambition led them to adopt a very different policy!) (20). In doing this I have been fulfilling the prediction of scripture that those who had never received tidings of Christ should see him, and that those who had never heard should understand (21). The unexpected emergencies that are constantly arising in such a life have over and over again defeated my plan to visit you (22). But now that centres of Gentile evangelization have been well established in this part of the world, an opportunity to gratify my long time desire to see you is clearly afforded me (23) by my prospective journey to Spain. I shall see you on my way, and shall rely on you to set me forward on my journey sure of your prayerful interest and cooperation, after I shall have satisfied in some degree my long desire to see you (24). There is one thing to be done first. I am just now starting for Jerusalem to perform a service for the Brothers there (25). The Brothers in Macedonia and Achaia have taken great satisfaction in gathering a fund to be shared with the large number of poor among the Jerusalem Brothers (26). I say that they have taken great satisfaction in doing this, and well they may, for they owe much to Jerusalem. God has opened up to the Gentiles the spiritual riches of the Jewish messianic hope, and it is only right that Gentiles should share their material riches with the Jews when need arises (27). When I have completed this errand, and have personally guaranteed to the Jerusalem Brothers the genuineness of the love that has prompted this gift, I shall immediately start for Spain by way of Rome (28). My heart grows so warm at the thought of meeting you that I know I shall come to you filled with the blessing which Christ has so often granted (29). One thing I wish to lay upon your hearts with great urgency. As you reverence Jesus Christ our common Lord, and as you feel that love which the Spirit puts in the hearts of all true Brothers for each other, unite with me in strenuous prayer to God in my behalf (30). Pray that I may be rescued from the murderous plots that I know are being laid for me by my unbelieving countrymen in Jerusalem. Pray also that the gift which I am carrying to Jerusalem may stir the hearts of Jewish believers there with love for their Gentile

14. And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.
15. But I write the more boldly unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given me of God,
16. that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

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Brothers, so that there may be unity in Christ's body (31). Pray too that I may without hindrance be brought to you in gladness of heart by the will of God, and have a little time for refreshing rest with you after the perils of my present task are over, and before my new task in Spain begins (32). The God of peace be with you all. Amen. (33)."

14. **I myself also am persuaded.** Paul apologizes for giving so much counsel to a church in whose founding he has had no part. His letters have been criticized in the city where he is now writing as being too authoritative in tone (2 Cor. 10:9-10). He wishes to avoid making such an impression on this church from which he will soon need support in carrying out his plan for a great mission on the western edge of the world (vs. 24, 28).

15. **I write.** Better: "I have written." **More boldly,** than the confidence expressed in v. 14 would seem to necessitate. **In some measure.** Perhaps better: "Here and there," where Paul has spoken with special force, for instance in the preceding section 14:1-15:13. Paul gives two excuses for his boldness. First, he had not supposed that he was telling them anything new; he was simply reminding them of what they already understood. Second, he must discharge the responsibility of an apostle to Gentiles which God has graciously (cf. 1:5) placed upon him (15<sup>b</sup>-16).

16. **A minister.** Evidently, in this connection, a ministering priest (cf. Heb. 8:2). **Ministering the gospel.** Performing priestly functions in the service of the gospel. **The offering up of the Gentiles.** In his priestly service he has an offering to bring to God, namely, the Gentile Christians of the empire. He is serving faithfully in order that he may, as a gospel priest, have his offering in such perfect condition that it will surely be accept-



17. I have therefore my glorying in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God.
18. For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed,
19. in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Ghost; so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ;

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able to God. If it is to be acceptable, its personnel must be made holy by fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

17. **I have therefore my glorying.** His ground of glorying is the priestly service which he performs in connection with the gospel of Christ.

18. **For I will not dare to speak.** He will not need to venture beyond the things which Christ has enabled him to do, in order to have ample reason for glorying. **For the obedience of the Gentiles.** To secure obedient faith in Christ from the Gentiles (cf. 1:5).

19. **In the power of signs and wonders.** In the power of Christ manifested through signs and wonders which Christ enabled him to perform. In Acts 2:22 "signs and wonders" designate the wonderful works of Jesus. Paul evidently found himself able to do wonderful deeds (cf. 2 Cor. 12:12), presumably healings like those of Jesus (cf. 1 Cor. 12:9), or perhaps the infliction of evil upon men as discipline (cf. 1 Cor. 5:3-5). Others too were able to do wonderful deeds through their connection with the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:9-10), whose presence with them constituted the beginning of the New Age with its anticipated powers (Heb. 6:5). **From Jerusalem.** This implies that Paul had done some preaching in Jerusalem (Gal. 1:18, Acts 9:28-29). **And round about.** At the distance of Paul and his readers from Jerusalem, Syria (Gal. 1:21) might be spoken of as round about Jerusalem. **Unto Illyricum.** This may or may not include Illyricum. He may have come simply within sight of the mountains of Illyricum. It is not impossible however that not long before writing this letter he had traveled along the great Egnatian road from Thessalonica even as far as its Illyrian seaport terminus, Dyrrhachium (modern Durazzo). From this point he could have been ferried across to Brundisium, and then have continued on the Egnatian road to Rome. He has always been moving toward Rome (23). **Fully**



20. yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation;
21. but, as it is written, They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came, And they who have not heard shall understand.
22. Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you:
23. but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come unto you,
24. whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you

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**preached.** "Fulfilled the gospel." brought it to its full expression. Everywhere Paul himself had apparently visited only the central cities, but from these centers he had superintended work in large surrounding areas (Acts 13:49; 14:6; 19:10).

20. **Not build upon another man's foundation.** Paul had "been ambitious" to do pioneer work. Perhaps he felt that as the one divinely commissioned apostle to the Gentile world it was always his duty to be in the lead so far as Gentile preaching was concerned. He was appointed always to go first and lay the foundation. He had, moreover, recently had sad occasion to see in Corinth the conduct of unscrupulous preachers, who felt no hesitation about building on another's foundation or even in destroying it (II Cor. 10:12-16).

22. **Wherefore.** Because there had been so much pioneer work to do, Paul had been repeatedly kept from carrying out his purpose to make a brief friendly visit to Rome, where the foundation had already been laid by others.

24. **Whensoever I go unto Spain.** In accordance with his purpose to do only pioneer work, he will now simply visit Rome on his way to an untouched field beyond them. In connection with his visit to Spain, Paul may have had in mind Gaul, Britain and parts of Germany. He evidently regards Italy as already on the way to adequate evangelization. There are Christians in Rome, Puteoli (Acts 28:13-14) and presumably in other Italian cities. The evangelization of the Gentile world seemed to him the necessary preparation for the breaking in of the New Age (11:25), and this event had at one time anyway seemed to him something that might

in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company)

25. but now, *I say*, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints.
26. For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia

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occur within his own lifetime. Perhaps he knew but little about the opportunities for travel and evangelization in the remoter regions of the northwest and north. **Brought on my way thitherward by you.** Paul would naturally depend much upon the Christians in Rome for support in the Spanish mission. They could help him by their prayers, by sending him gifts of money and perhaps evangelists. They would be to him and his work beyond them what the church in Syrian Antioch had at one time been. **In some measure.** The intense "longing" (v. 23) for them could not be entirely satisfied by a passing visit!

25. **But now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem.** For many months (II Cor. 8: 10, 9: 2) Paul through letters and committees (II Cor. 8: 16-24) had been collecting money, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in Galatia (I Cor. 16: 1) and presumably in Asia. This money, contributed by Gentile Christians was to be carried by Paul himself accompanied by a committee of Gentile Christians (I Cor. 16: 3-4; Acts 20: 3-4), as a conciliatory gift to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. It was tactfully suggested that the Jerusalem church could use this money in the care of its poor, who seem to have been numerous, perhaps as a result of the community policy that prevailed in the early days (Acts 2: 44-45; 4: 32), but more probably as a result of social and economic persecutions inflicted by orthodox Jews on a sect which had originally been largely made up of the poorer folk. Paul relied largely on this gift as a means of bringing the discordant Jewish and Gentile elements in the church together (II Cor. 9: 12-14), which would naturally seem to him to be a necessary preparation for the Lord's coming to introduce the New Age. The contribution would also tend to remove prejudice on the part of orthodox Jews against a movement which had become so largely Gentile in its character, and so prepare the way for a national Jewish movement toward Christianity which also seemed to Paul to be necessarily antecedent to the Lord's coming (II: 1-15; 25-27). See Introduction, p. 41.

26. **A certain contribution,** a "sharing." The same word in II Cor. 9: 13.

- and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem.
27. Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it *to them* also to minister unto them in carnal things.
28. When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by you unto Spain.
29. And I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.
30. Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;
31. that I may be delivered from them that are dis-

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27. **It hath been their good pleasure.** The situation that lies back of II Cor. 8-9 seems to indicate that in Corinth there had been no very great heartiness in the matter. The Philippians as usual (Phil. 4: 15-18) had taken the matter up eagerly (II Cor. 8: 1-5). **Their debtors they are.** From Paul's viewpoint "salvation is from the Jews" (cf. Jn. 4: 22). It is "the Jew first and also the Gentile" (1: 16). Gentile Christians must not let their anti-Jewish prejudice make them "high-minded" (11: 17-20).

28. **Have sealed to them this fruit.** The seal on a package or document guarantees the genuineness of its contents. Paul will personally guarantee to the Jerusalem Christians that the gift comes from Gentile Christian donors, and expresses their love. It is called "fruit" because it is the product of their love (cf. Gal. 5: 22).

29. **The blessing of Christ.** The blessing, or benefit, that comes from Christ through spiritual association with him.

31. **Delivered from them that are disobedient in Judaea.** The orthodox, non-Christian Jews. Paul's earlier experience in Judaea (I Thes. 2: 14-16, Acts 9: 28-30) naturally made him dread this visit. There was probably constant correspondence going on between the authorities in Jerusalem and the leaders of

obedient in Judaea, and *that* my ministration which *I have* for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints;

32. that I may come unto you in joy through the will of God, and together with you find rest.
33. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

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the *Ghetto* in every large city of the empire. The leaders of the Corinthian *Ghetto*, where the feeling against Paul had been particularly strong (Acts 18:9-17), would have kept the Jerusalem authorities posted regarding all Paul's plans and movements. He knew that the bitter antagonists, "spurious apostles" (II Cor. 11:13), whom he had recently driven from the field in Corinth, would be waiting for him in Jerusalem, the city that had a monopoly of prophet killing (Lk. 13:33), and would certainly be in collusion with the non-Christian Jews there. The non-Christian Jews, and the ultra conservative Jewish Christians as well, might regard his gift as a diabolical effort to bribe Jewish Christians to tolerate Gentile Christianity! Possibly he had already learned of the plot to assassinate him some dark night on shipboard during his prospective voyage to Syria (Acts 20:3), and knew that the assassins would be waiting for him in Jerusalem. He was not disappointed (Acts 23:12-13). **May be acceptable to the saints.** The second occasion of solicitude was the possibility that the gift might not have the conciliatory influence he hoped it would exert over the Jewish Christians. This great undertaking, at which he had worked so long and which seemed so vitally important, might come to nothing.

32. **With you find rest.** After the severe nervous strain of the Jerusalem visit is over he feels that he will certainly need rest!

1 *Phæbe of Cenchreæ, bearer of the letter, introduced and commended, 16: 1-2.*

16. I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchreæ:

2. that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter

"I commend to you our Christian sister Phœbe who will bring to you this letter. She is well known here as an active worker in the church at Cenchreæ (1). Receive her as a disciple of the Lord with all the kindness that fills Christian hearts. Stand by her in any business in which she may need help. She has stood out as the helper of many a Christian traveler in the harbor town. I myself have been the recipient of her hospitality (2)."

1. **A servant of the church that is at Cenchreæ.** On the destination of this chapter see Introduction, p. 70. Cenchreæ was seven or eight miles from Corinth, of which city it was the eastern seaport. It must have been a busy suburb well supplied with porters, warehouses and shipping firms, since there was a great deal of passenger traffic and transportation of goods across the isthmus. The word "servant," or "deaconess," indicates that Phœbe was more than an ordinary member of the church, as does the fact that she had been a "helper of many" (v. 2). If her business in Rome was church business, this would be further indication of her official position. If she had private business to look after in Rome, that fact would indicate that she possessed property and was able in a semi-official way to help the church, especially by keeping open house for the many Christian travelers who would be waiting in the harbor town for the sailing of their ships. She may have once helped Paul in this way (v. 2, cf. Acts 18:18). She would then be like the family of Stephanas of Corinth, who "set themselves to minister" (1 Cor. 16:15). Probably she was the bearer of this letter.

2. **Worthily of the saints.** With the generosity that ought to characterize Christian intercourse.

she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a succourer of many, and of mine own self.

2 *Greetings to many known personally or by reputation to Paul, 16: 3-16.*

3. Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus,
4. who for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles:
5. and *salute* the church that is in their house. Salute

3. **Prisca and Aquila.** A wife and husband, (Acts 18:2). Paul calls the wife Prisca in his three references to them. Twice he places the wife's name first, here and in II Tim. 4: 19, while in I Cor. 16: 19 the husband's name comes first. In Luke's three references to them (Acts 18: 2, 18, 26) he calls the wife Priscilla, a diminutive form of Prisca, and twice places her name first. When they are first heard of they are in Corinth, having been obliged to leave Rome because the Emperor ordered the police to clear the *Ghetto* (Acts 18:2). They were tent-makers like Paul, and so Paul naturally lodged and worked at his trade with them (Acts 18:3). Since nothing is said in Acts about their becoming Christians, it may be inferred that they were already Christians when they first met Paul. Aquila was certainly a Jew and born in Pontus (Acts 18:2). Prisca is a Latin name and it is possible that she was a Roman lady. The Latin name, however, is not enough to prove it, for many Jews had Latin names. They went with Paul to Ephesus (Acts 18: 18-19; I Cor. 16: 19), and on the supposition that this chapter is an integral part of the letter (see Introduction, p. 72) they returned later to Rome.

4. **Who for my life laid down their own necks.** "To risk one's neck" was probably a current phrase meaning to risk one's life. A roll found in the excavations at Herculaneum speaks of one who for "the most beloved of his relatives or friends would readily stake his neck." (Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East*, p. 120.). Paul had been in peril in Asia when Prisca and Aquila were with him (I Cor. 16: 19, 15: 32, II Cor. 1: 8-10). All Gentile churches had occasion to thank them for what they had done to rescue the apostle to the Gentiles.

5. **The church that is in their house.** The group of believers

Epænetus my beloved, who is the first fruits of Asia unto Christ.

6. Salute Mary, who bestowed much labour on you.
7. Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also have been in Christ before me.
8. Salute Ampliatus my beloved in the Lord.
9. Salute Urbanus our fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

that was accustomed to meet in their house, since there were at this time of course no buildings corresponding to modern church edifices (cf. Col. 4: 15, Philem. 2). Perhaps vs. 14-15 indicate other similar groups. Prisca and Aquila made the same use of their home in Ephesus (I Cor. 16: 19). **First fruits of Asia unto Christ.** Paul's first convert in the province of Asia, the beginning of a great harvest for Christ. Paul naturally remembered with peculiar distinctness and affection his first converts in any region (cf. I Cor. 16: 15).

6. **Mary who bestowed much labor on you.** Like a good missionary statesman Paul kept himself thoroughly informed about the details and workers in every Gentile church. Mary was one who had been reported to him as conspicuously active in caring for the sick and poor or looking after the tempted. The same word in a similar connection occurs in I Cor. 16: 16; I Thess. 5: 12.

7. **Andronicus and Junias.** The Greek form of the second name may be either masculine, Junias, or feminine, Junia. If feminine, a woman is called an apostle. **My kinsmen.** Probably fellow Jews (cf. 9: 3). If so, an indication that there were but few Jews among the Christians in Rome, since these two were notable because they were Jews. Paul wishes to identify himself with the Jews, and so to overcome the erroneous opinion of the Gentile Christians that he has turned against his nation. See on 9: 1. **Fellow prisoners.** They had at some time been in prison with Paul. **Of note among the apostles.** Not "esteemed by the apostles," but themselves belonging to the distinguished but not sharply defined class of commissioned traveling preachers, a class in which, because its limits were not sharply defined, some unworthy persons could claim membership (II Cor. 11: 5, 13). The conversion of these two men had antedated Paul's conversion.

8-10. The names of persons known personally or by reputation to Paul—two called "my beloved," perhaps to distinguish them as



10. Salute Apelles the approved in Chris    Salute them which are of the *household* of Aristobulus.
11. Salute Herodion my kinsman.    Salute them of the *household* of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.
12. Salute Tryphæna and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, which laboured much in the Lord.
13. Salute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

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personal acquaintances. Ampliatus, Urbanus and many of the names in the following verses appear in inscriptions or elsewhere as the names of slaves (see Sanday, *Romans*; and Lightfoot, *Philippians*, pp. 173-177). This fact, of course, does not prove that the persons mentioned here were necessarily slaves. Lightfoot thinks that many of them were slaves who had come into the possession of the Emperor, and were among those "of Cæsar's household" (Phil. 4:22). **Of the household of Aristobulus.** Christians who were, or had been, members of the household of Aristobulus, either as slaves or dependents. Aristobulus himself either is no longer living or, if living, is presumably not a Christian, since no word is sent to him. Aristobulus was a common name in the Herod family and, since the Herods were often in Rome, this may have been one of them. Lightfoot (*Philippians*, p. 175) maintains that he was.

**11. Herodion my kinsman.** Probably another Jew. **The household of Narcissus.** Certain of the slaves and dependents of Narcissus were Christians. A man of this name, a freedman, had been a wealthy secretary of the Emperor Claudius (Suetonius, *Lives of the Emperors*, Claudius 28).

**12.** Three Christian women, the last named perhaps a personal friend of Paul, and the other two known to him by reputation. See on v. 6.

**13. Rufus the chosen.** A man of such special excellence of character as to warrant applying to him this high designation of God's true people. A man of this name was famous in the region for which Mark's Gospel was prepared (presumably Rome), because his father had carried Jesus' cross (Mk. 15:21). **His mother and mine.** Paul had somewhere temporarily found a home with this family and been treated like a son by his friend's mother.

14. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren that are with them.
15. Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints that are with them.
16. Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.

3 *Warning against the type of licentious Christianity that is appearing here and there in the churches,*  
16: 17-20.

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14. A group of men who for some reason have quarters together or live in the same part of the city, and are in some sense leaders, for they have "brothers with them."

15. A husband and wife, a brother and sister and a fifth person also constitute the nucleus of a group of Christians. It may be that this group and the preceding lived in some village near enough to the city to be in constant communication with the Christians in the city.

16. Salute one another. They are to have the same affection for each other that Paul has himself just been expressing for them, and such as all the churches of Christ everywhere surely feel for them (cf. 1: 8).

"I most earnestly beg you, Brothers, to be on your guard against the first appearance among you of those who falsely profess to be Christians, but who, wherever they go, cause bitter dissension, and ruin the character of those whom they influence. We have seen them here in Corinth. Their views are utterly opposed to those which you were taught. You will certainly turn your backs instantly upon them whenever they may appear (17). They are no "bondservants" of Jesus Christ, but are in bondage to their own lusts. They present their foul views in most fair and persuasive speech so that some very good people have been led off by them (18). It will not be so among you, for your steadfast obedience to Christ and his truth is talked of by the Brothers everywhere. I rejoice in your well deserved reputation and I wish you to continue skillful in recognizing and choosing the good, single minded and unswerving in your opposition to the evil (19). The God of peace will soon give you rest from the attacks of such evil men, when in the swift coming judgment day

17. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them.
18. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent.
19. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I rejoyce therefore over you: but I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil.
20. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

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he will put Satan and all his ministers under your feet. Till then may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you (20)."

17-18. **Them which are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling.** These persons are libertines (v. 18), Gentile Christians who do not realize that chastity is an essential part of Christian ethics. Their point of view has been discussed in chapters 6-8. They are not now active in Rome, but they are to be found in many places and have recently made serious trouble in Corinth, the city from which Paul is now writing. In the last clause of v. 16 Paul has looked over the world, and in imagination seen all Gentile Christian churches sending greeting to the Gentile Christian church in the capital city. This leads him to speak of the common peril of all Gentile Christianity, and to warn the brethren to be watching for the first insidious appearance of it there.

19. **Your obedience.** Not obedience to Paul (Jülicher), but obedience to the true teaching which they had learned (v. 17) from those who first led them into the pure Christian life; obedience to Christ whom they serve (v. 18, cf. also 15: 18). **Simple.** Without any admixture of evil.

20. **Bruise Satan under your feet shortly.** An allusion to Gen. 3: 15, which is to find speedy fulfilment in the judgment day so near at hand. (Cf. Testament of Levi, 18: 12.)

The benediction appears at various places in different texts—here, at the end of v. 24, at the end of v. 27, and sometimes in two of these three places.

4 *Greetings from a group of brothers closely associated with Paul and interested in the dictation of his letter, 16: 21-23.*

21. Timothy my fellow-worker saluteth you; and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

22. I Tertius, who write the epistle, salute you in the Lord.

23. Gaius my host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the treasurer of the city saluteth you, and Quartus the brother.

21. **Timothy.** A half breed Jew whose pious grandmother (II Tim. 1: 5) belonged to the more liberal type of Jews, since she allowed her daughter to marry a synagogue Gentile, and her grandson to grow up uncircumcised; one of Paul's South Galatian converts (Acts 16: 1-3, I Cor. 4: 17), and his favorite assistant in missionary work (Phil. 2: 19-22). He was at this time planning to go with Paul to Jerusalem, perhaps as a Galatian member of the delegation appointed to carry the Gentile gift to Jerusalem (Acts 20: 4, I Cor. 16: 1-4, Rom. 15: 25-26). **Jason.** Possibly the Thessalonian (Acts 17: 5). **Sosipater.** Possibly Sopater of Berea (Acts 20: 4). **My kinsmen.** Jews. Another emphasis of Paul's pride in being a Jew, especially necessary in writing to this strongly Gentile church which thinks that Paul has abandoned his people. See on 9: 1 and 16: 7.

22. **Tertius.** The scribe who takes Paul's dictation is a Christian, and asks permission to insert his own greeting here. It may be that whenever Paul summoned his scribe to take dictation during the days or weeks in which this letter was being prepared, a group of friends gathered about him to hear his words and send their greetings.

23. **Gaius my host.** Paul was the guest of this Christian gentleman, and was probably at this moment dictating the letter in his home. He was one of the very few whom Paul himself had baptised (I Cor. 1: 14). Because large groups of Corinthian Christians often met in his house, or because he constantly entertained traveling Christians, he was called "host of the whole church." **The treasurer of the city.** Presumably Corinth. Cf. II Tim. 4: 20. **Quartus.** Perhaps the slave of Erastus. In that case it is particularly courteous to call him "the brother" (cf. Col. 4: 9, Philem. 16).

5 *Concluding Doxology*, 16:25-27

25. Now to him that is able to stablish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal,
26. but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith;
27. to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever. Amen.

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"Now to him that is able to establish you in the pure life that leads surely into the salvation of the New Age, according to the proclamation of the Lordship of Jesus made in the gospel that I preach, and according to the disclosure of the secret purpose that lay for ages concealed in the mind of God (25), a purpose that is now being wrought out in action and that the changeless God long ago commanded the prophets to announce to all the Gentiles in order to secure from them the obedience that springs from faith (26)—to this only wise God we ascribe glory for ever through our Lord Jesus Christ (27)."

25. The beginning of a concluding doxology, long and dignified, like the opening sentences of the great epistle, 1: 1-17. **My gospel.** See on 2: 16. **The preaching of Jesus Christ.** The preaching about Jesus Christ as Lord (cf. 10: 8-9, II Cor. 4: 5). **The revelation of the mystery.** The gospel reveals a "mystery," that is, a secret, not necessarily hard to understand but hard to find out. According to 11: 25 this secret, that long lay undisclosed in the mind of God, is God's method of bringing Gentiles and Jews together into one race ready for the New Age through their common spiritual fellowship with Jesus Christ (cf. Col. 1: 26-28).

26. **By the scriptures of the prophets.** The secret lay in the mind of God during the ages before creation (cf. Col. 1: 26; Eph. 1: 4), but appeared in what God commanded the prophets to write. **The nations.** Better, the Gentiles. See on 1: 5. **Unto obedience of faith.** Intended to secure an obedience springing from faith.

27. **To whom.** Refers to Christ as the sentence stands, but the sense seems to require that the glory be ascribed to God. Perhaps the MSS. which omit the relative should be followed.

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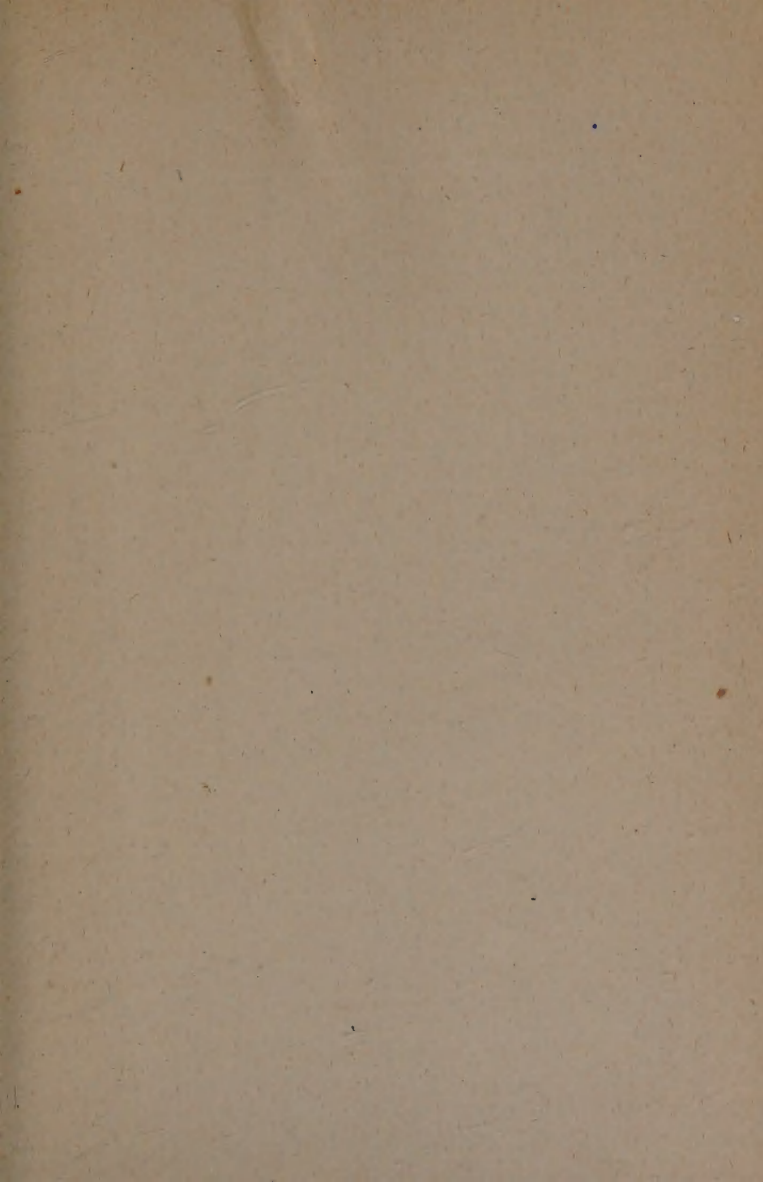
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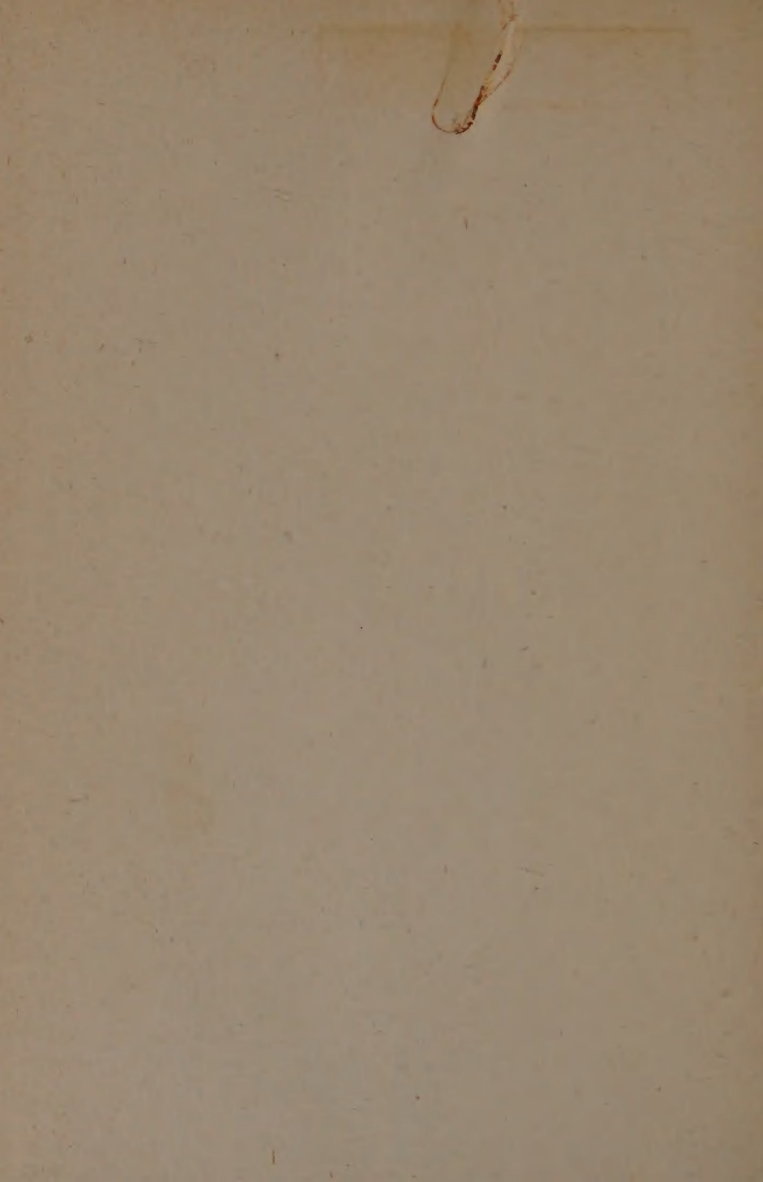
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